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VOL. 2206.

THE BLUE VEIL BY FLORENCE MONTGOMERY
IN ONE VOLUME.

LEIPZIG: BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ.

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By the same Author,

MISUNDERSTOOD		1 vol.
THROWN TOGETHER		2 vols.
THWARTED		1 vol.
WILD MIKE		1 vol.
SEAFORTH		2 vols.

THE BLUE VEIL.

MORAL TALES.

BY

FLORENCE MONTGOMERY,

AUTHOR OF "MISUNDERSTOOD," "THROWN TOGETHER," ETC.

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LEIPZIG

BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

1883.

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PART I.

WHY DOES SHE WEAR A BLUE VEIL?

OR,

A LESSON OF CURIOSITY.

PART I

THE HISTORY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

A HISTORY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

CHAPTER I.

ARCHIBALD FORBES.

ARCHIBALD and HELEN FORBES were the children of a member of Parliament, and lived in London from February until August; and at Castle Forbes, their home in the Highlands, from August until February. This was the routine of their lives.

But this year, that is the year in which this story opens, nearly the middle of August found them still in London.

There had been two things to prevent the usual migration to Scotland.

First, their mother, always an invalid, had been very ill, and though now slowly recovering, was totally unfit for a long journey, or indeed to move out of the house at all.

Secondly, the House of Commons was likely to sit much later than usual, and it was impossible for their father to leave town.

Under these circumstances, and as London was getting very hot and unwholesome, Mr. and Mrs.

Forbes made up their minds to send the two children to some English sea-side place, until the whole family could move north together.

Archie and Nell heard of the plan with mixed feelings. They did not quite like the idea of leaving their mother while she was still so far from being well as to be constantly in need of their services; for both were good sick-nurses; quiet, attentive, considerate, and capital hands at jobs and messages.

On the other hand, the thought of the free outdoor life they would lead at the sea-side was very delightful.

Their mother assured them that she should manage to get on somehow; and that though she should miss them very much, it would be a great relief to her to feel they were out of hot, dusty London, and running about in the fresh sea air.

Mademoiselle d'Hénin, their governess, was going on her usual holiday.

They would therefore go to the sea-side under the care of their nurse.

Nurse she *had* been, but she was now called Nelly's maid.

Archie had been for some time handed over to the footman; but Tucker, as the nurse was called, was a dear friend and favourite companion with

both, and they enjoyed the thought of being with her, and of living old nursery days over again.

They were, as I say, very fond of her, and very glad to be with her; but I am afraid Archie, at any rate, did not consider it necessary to be always perfectly obedient to her and that she let them have their own way a good deal.

The party, then, consisting of Archie, Nell, and Tucker, started on their expedition after luncheon, on the 11th of August.

"You must write to me very often," said Mrs. Forbes as she wished the children good-bye; "and I will write to you as often as I can. And, Archie dear, don't be reckless of your life and limbs. Don't let me live in dread of a telegram announcing some disaster. I want us all to start safe and sound for Scotland the moment we can."

"Yes," chimed in his father, "be careful; for I shall wait for no one. Any one with broken bones, twisted ankles, or disorders of any kind, will be left behind. I want to get your mother to the Highland breezes the moment she is strong enough to travel, and I shall not delay her journey for any one."

"No fear," laughed Archie; "I'd sooner not climb a rock or a tree the whole time I'm at the

sea-side, than run the risk of not starting with you. And I couldn't say more than that, could I?"

Mr. Forbes took them to the station, saw them safely into the train, and then went off to the House of Commons.

Nell was very quiet the first part of the journey. It was very hot, and she was thinking how dull her mother must already be feeling, all alone in the big back drawing-room, on the sofa.

Archie's voice broke in upon her meditations.

"How long are we supposed to stay at this place, Nell?" he said.

"It will be quite three weeks," she answered; "the doctor said mother wouldn't be fit for the journey before that. So we shall be there till just September. To-day is the 11th of August."

"Is to-day the 11th?" exclaimed Archie; "then to-morrow is the 12th!"

"That's not very wonderful," said Nell, laughing, "and the day after the 12th is the 13th!"

"Don't!" said Archie, rather put out. "How silly you are! you know what I mean quite well."

"I didn't *really*, Archie," said Nell gently, and looking distressed. They did not often quarrel, this brother and sister. Their mother had a great dislike to a bickering, arguing kind of talk, and always stopped them at once if they embarked

upon one. I say *they*, but I should more correctly say *he*; for, as the reader will perceive from the specimen of their conversation, it was Archie, and *not* Nell, who indulged himself in it; and that it was Nell, and not Archie, who was the first to give the gentle answer which "turneth away wrath."

Archie recovered his temper immediately.

"Well," he resumed, "I was thinking of the grouse, and how poor papa would lose his shooting to-morrow. I wish that old House of Commons would blow up. I shouldn't mind being the Guy Fawkes myself."

"Poor papa!" answered Nell, "I quite forgot about the 12th. It was very stupid of me. But, Archie, even if the session were over, mamma couldn't go, so it comes to the same thing, doesn't it?"

Other passengers now got in, and Nell settled herself with her book.

Archie had one, but he did not read it.

He lay back, gazing out of window at the country flying past, and fell into a train of thought.

He was rather a peculiar person, this young hero of mine, as the reader will discover as the story goes on; and one of his chief characteristics was his vivid imagination. Now, an occasion like the present was just one to set it going; and once

set going, it sometimes ran away with him altogether.

Everything, just now, on which he was embarking was new and untried.

He was on his way to a new place, to a new kind of life, and under new circumstances.

He had never in his life before been away like this, alone with Nell and Tucker.

There was no saying what adventures he might not meet with, what new and out-of-the-way things might not happen.

It was rather an inspiring thought, and he speculated, as he gazed out of window, as to what sort of place it would turn out to be, and with what kind of people he might chance to be thrown.

He was very fond of weaving out histories about other people. He liked imagining what their characters, ways, and lives were, and wherein they differed from his own.

These speculations about the new life on which he was entering amused and engrossed him all the way. And they served a double purpose; for they also diverted his thoughts from a grievance under which he was just now suffering, and which he was very anxious to put out of his head. Grievance, I call it; but Archie, in his own mind, dignified it by the name of his "secret sorrow."

It was in connection with his Highland home; and it had, this year, quite taken off the keen edge of the delight with which the thought of returning thither generally filled him.

The "secret sorrow" was this:—

He and Nell had a great friend in the Highlands—the only daughter of their nearest neighbour, Lord Lochside. She was grown up, but as long as they could remember she had been their dearest friend and companion.

Her being grown up made the friendship all the more delightful, because they were allowed to do things with her which they would not have been allowed to do by themselves, or with friends of their own age.

For instance, she had her own boat on the loch, and when they were even much younger than they were now, they had always been trusted to her.

She could manage a boat perfectly, and was also a good swimmer.

And, being at once cautious and fearless, there was double safety. For, under her sensible management, there was but little fear of the boat upsetting; and if such an accident had happened, she would have been able to save their lives and her own!

Under these circumstances Mrs. Forbes was

quite happy when Nell and Archie were under Lady Maggie's care.

Many were the delightful expeditions they had taken with her.

She was very fond of children, and very clever in devising schemes of amusement for them; and her parents being old, and having no brothers or sisters, she was always glad to make companions of Nell and Archie, although they were so much younger than she. So far, you will say, there was no grievance.

No; but the grievance is coming.

This friend, this neighbour, this delightful companion, was actually going to be married!

That is to say, according to Archie's view of the case, she was going to leave them for ever, and go far away to a home of her own.

He had had her all his life, and now some horrid man was going to take her away.

How Archie hated that man! He had never seen him, nor heard his name, and didn't wish to. He had utterly declined to hear anything about him. He looked upon him as a thief, who had come and stolen away one of his own most highly prized possessions.

He hardly knew which he was most angry with, him or his friend herself. He thought it so horrid

of her to like to leave her home, and her father and mother, and last, but not least, Archie himself, and to go and make a home of some strange place she had never seen before.

He thought she loved her Highland home as much as he did his, and it was evident she did not; for nothing, he felt, would ever persuade *him* to leave it and go off to a strange one.

He was deeply hurt to think she could do so—and do so, too, of her own free will, not being in the least obliged.

His mother had often warned him such a thing *might* happen, and that he must not expect to keep his friend and neighbour always; but years had gone on and it had *not* happened, so that Archie had felt it never would, and the news had come upon him like a thunder-clap.

This, then, was Archie's "secret trouble," and I do not know whether he will get sympathy from my readers or not.

Nell did not take the same view of it as Archie.

She was rather excited at the thoughts of her friend's marriage.

Had they been going to Scotland in time she was to have been bridesmaid; and, to Nell, the excitement of this made up for a good deal, for she had never yet been bridesmaid to any one.

But this could not be now, as the wedding would be over long before they got back.

But, all the same, Nell liked to hear about the preparations for the marriage, and was much bored that she never could get Archie to take any interest in the subject. In short, he would not even allow her to mention their friend's name; and if she accidentally did so, he would turn away his head and purse up his mouth, and give her no sort of answer.

She had once gently tried to put before Archie the bright side of the impending change; she said perhaps Lady Margaret would invite them to come and stay with her in her new home, or, at any rate, she would be sure to come and stay for weeks together at her father's house, and it would all be very nice, and they should see her just as much as ever.

But she had brought down such a storm upon herself, that she had never ventured to approach the subject since.

Did she *suppose*, he had indignantly asked her, that if Lady Margaret stayed for *months* at Loch-side, it could *ever* be the same again? And as to *staying* with *her*, nothing should induce him to do such a thing. He didn't *wish* to see her in a new home. He would far rather *only* think of her on her own loch, and among her own moors and mountains.

No! it would *never* be the same again, *never!* and the only thing to be done now was to forget Lady Margaret as fast as possible.

"Oh, Archie!" Nell had exclaimed, "I think that's rather a shame!"

"*She* forgets *us*," Archie had answered bitterly, "and goes away and leaves us, and of her own free will too! Nelly, don't talk about it again; it only makes me angry."

And so poor Nell had refrained ever since, though it was an enormous effort to her.

Archie's thoughts would probably have run gloomily on his "secret sorrow" all the way to Sandbank if they had not been more busily engaged in speculating on the immediate future which lay all new and untried before him.

Sandbank was a quiet little watering-place on the east coast, and not one very likely to furnish any stirring adventure; but Archie felt convinced something very amusing and exciting would turn up during their stay there, and his thoughts occupied him so pleasantly that he was quite surprised to find how quickly the two hours' journey passed away, and how soon they seemed to arrive at their destination.

The train stopped at a quiet little station just as the afternoon was getting cool, and Archie and

Nell jumped eagerly out. There was a nice little open fly waiting, and Archie engaged it while Tucker went after the luggage.

There was so little that it could all go on the box by the driver's side, and the party got in and drove off in high spirits. The fresh sweet air was most refreshing as it blew in their faces, and their way lay through shady lanes till they suddenly turned a corner and came straight upon the sea. It was the dearest little sea-side place!—a mere fishing village in a bay, with just one row of clean little villas which called itself the Esplanade.

In front of one of these little houses the fly stopped, and a neat smiling landlady came to the door and bade them welcome to Sandbank. She then preceded them into the house, and ushered them upstairs into a charming sitting-room with a large bay-window overlooking the sea.

On the table was spread a most substantial-looking tea.

Opening out of this room was a large bedroom where Tucker and Nell were to sleep, and beyond was a nice little room for Archie.

Everything was spotlessly clean and neat.

The house was what you call semi-detached; that is, there were two houses in the building, though each had its own separate entrance. The

back windows looked upon a nice little garden, which was the joint property of both houses. However, nice as it was, Archie and Nell took only a very hasty glance at it, as they felt very sure that they would never care to go into it; they would always want to be by the sea—morning, noon, and night.

In fact, Archie, who was a little careless in what he said, and did not always sufficiently think of other people's feelings, blurted this out before the landlady, just as she was proudly pointing out all the advantages of her trim, well-kept little garden.

Now Nell had much more tact, and she saw how pleased and proud the landlady was. She was afraid her feelings might be hurt, and so she gave Archie a poke, and eagerly said, "Oh, yes! it is a nice little garden, and I am sure we shall go into it sometimes."

Archie, thus reminded, broke in with "Oh yes, I dare say we shall on *wet days*, when we can't go on the beach."

The landlady looked rather surprised, and as if she thought her new lodgers were rather curious sort of people.

"There's a nice tree there for you to climb, Archie," put in Nell, anxious to make the best of

the garden to him; "and it's a pretty difficult one too," she added, looking imploringly at him, as if to beg him to admire something, or to say something pleasant.

"So now," said the landlady, "I've shown you everything; and I can only hope that you'll find yourselves comfortable, and that the young gentleman will enjoy himself."

Nell thought this looked as if the landlady were suspicious that Archie was not satisfied, and cast another glance at him, accompanied by another and rather harder poke. These combined efforts were successful, and Archie began suddenly praising everything with the greatest vehemence; even the most common and hideous little ornament on the mantelpiece came in for a share of his admiration.

They now all returned into the sitting-room, and fresh praises were bestowed upon the tea, to which they presently sat down, and to which they did ample justice.

It was getting on for seven when they had finished. But they had an hour for a ramble on the sea-shore before bedtime, and were very much pleased with the general aspect of their new place of residence.

CHAPTER II.

A GOOD LET.

My readers probably all know the delights of the first day at the sea-side, so I need not expatiate upon them.

I need only say that everything which it is possible to do at the sea-side Archie and Nell contrived to do during the day. They paddled, they watched the bathers, they sailed boats, they got limpets, they collected shells, they picked seaweed off the rocks, they even rode on donkeys.

In short, they exhausted the resources of Sandbank; and Tucker was quite afraid they would never make their pleasures last out if they ran through them so quickly.

In the intervals of the day Archie struck up a violent friendship with the landlady, and so ingratiated himself with her that she confided to him all her affairs concerning her lodgings, her earnings thereby, &c. The other half of the house was still unlet, which was rather a trouble to her, and Archie entered into this grievance with all his heart.

"It will be a dreadful loss to her, you know," he said in the evening, as he, Nell, and Tucker sat together by the open window just before bedtime. "I wish we could do something about it. I think I'll write and ask mother to recommend it to some of her friends in London."

"It will let fast enough," said Tucker; "and for my part, I'd just as soon have it empty. It's far quieter and pleasanter for us than if the little back garden were always full of a pack of nurses and children."

Archie, whose sympathies were now all enlisted on behalf of the landlady, thought this speech of Tucker's rather selfish; but he did not say so. He contented himself with observing that any possible lodgers were not *obliged* to be nurses and children; with which reflection Tucker agreed, though she still considered it was more likely than not.

Archie had now settled in his own mind that the adventures he had thought over in the train would be in some way connected with the lodgers who might chance to occupy the other half of the house. In fact, if there *were* to be adventures or anything at all interesting, *that* seemed to be the only quarter from which they were likely to arise, for there were very few people at Sandbank, and those there were did not look to him at all inviting.

So he found himself taking a most lively interest during the next two days in the landlady's hopes and fears concerning her vacant rooms.

"It's let! the other half of the house is let!" he exclaimed, bursting into the sitting-room one morning in a great state of excitement; "the landlady had a letter yesterday engaging the rooms, and the lodgers are coming to-morrow. There's such a cleaning and dusting going on; and hanging up muslin curtains, and all sorts of preparations."

Tucker received the news very indifferently. She did not seem at all interested.

Archie turned to Nell.

"It's rather exciting, isn't it, Nell? I wonder what they will be like? It's rather important for us, you know, as we share the garden. I hope they are children. I must go back and ask the landlady if she knows."

He was rushing off again, when Tucker stopped him and said, "You know, Master Archie, it will not make any difference to you if they are. Your mamma's orders were you and Miss Nelly were to make friends with *no one*. Those were her very words."

"Oh, I'm not going to make friends with them," said Archie impatiently, "but I suppose one may

take a *little* interest in one's fellow-creatures if one likes."

So he returned to his new friend down-stairs, and came back in a quarter of an hour brim-full of information.

The landlady had been telling him about the incoming lodgers, and it was quite like a story-book; there seemed a sort of mystery about them, which made it all doubly interesting.

The landlady had never seen them, and knew nothing about them. The rooms had been engaged by letter in the name of Miss Lorrimer, but whether it was Miss Lorrimer herself who wrote the letter or not, the landlady had no means of knowing.

If so, it was plain that Miss Lorrimer was an uneducated woman, for there were a great many mistakes in spelling in the letter. Miss Lorrimer also appeared to be very particular and very dictatorial. "Everything," she said in her letter, "must be 'spotlessly clean,' or she should remove elsewhere."

"Everything also must be punctual to a minute, for," said Miss Lorrimer, "I am like clockwork myself, and expect every one else to be the same."

"What a disagreeable lady she must be?" exclaimed Nell indignantly.

"She brings another person with her," continued

Archie, "but whether it is one person or two, poor Mrs. Landlady can't make out. She calls her her 'maid and housekeeper.' It might be two maids or one, you know, and the landlady doesn't know whether to prepare one bedroom or two."

"I wonder she lets her come at all," said Nell; "I should write and say I wouldn't have her."

"She couldn't afford to do that," said Archie; "her rooms might remain unlet, which is just what she has been so anxious about. And this is a very 'good let,' you see. Six weeks, and perhaps longer, not just a 'three weeks let' like us. I wish we were a better let, for the landlady's sake."

Nell was divided in her own mind between the wish to be a "better let," and the desire to go to Scotland as soon as possible.

"We may not be such a 'good let,'" she said, "but I'm sure we're much more agreeable lodgers. Mamma never wrote all that about spotlessly clean and punctual as clockwork."

"A good thing she didn't," thought Archie to himself, conscious of having already upset an ink-stand, and of having been late for breakfast two mornings running.

"When are they coming?" asked Nell.

"To-morrow," he answered, "but they have not

said at what time. They are going to drive the whole way from their place in Suffolk."

"It's strange Miss Lorrimer should have a place of her own," said Tucker; "she must be some very rich old maiden lady: only one would think, if that were the case, she would have known how to write and spell."

"It's rather dull after all," said Nell; "I was in hopes it would have been a lady and her children. They would have been amusing to watch."

"Oh, you must not be in such a hurry to judge," said Archie, who could not bear the slightest damper on his hopes and speculations; "how can you possibly tell? Hasty judgments are bad things. How often mother has told you that, Nell! I feel pretty sure now that there is something very interesting, or at any rate very amusing, about these coming neighbours of ours."

Nell was too humble to remind Archie that perhaps his judgment was quite as hasty as her own.

That such little home truths were never well received by her brother, she had long since discovered, though he was remarkably fond of obtruding them upon *her*.

So she allowed him to have the privilege of the last word, and the conversation ended.

The rest of the day was spent, as usual, out of doors, and Archie condescended to go to bed very punctually; so anxious was he for the day to be over, and so impatient for the exciting events which he was sure the morrow would bring.

The morning came, but it proved to be a rainy one; and as it wore on, it became evident there was no chance of the weather improving.

They were in for a thorough wet day.

Tucker was much concerned. She deplored the children losing a day out of doors, and looked forward with some dismay to the thought of Archie, without any lessons, shut up in the small sitting-room all day long.

She need not have troubled herself, however. Archie was quite happy. He had food for his imagination; and to him the wet day only made the thoughts of the advent of the new lodgers still more exciting. He was down in the landlady's room directly after breakfast, to ask at what time they might be expected; but, as no letter had arrived by the early post, she could give him no information. She fully expected, however, to hear by the twelve o'clock post, and promised to let Archie know directly she knew herself.

"Rather ridiculous," said Archie to Nell, "to

pretend to be so punctual, and not even to say at what hour she is coming. Why, poor Mrs. Brown" (he had now discovered this was the landlady's name)—"poor Mrs. Brown does not know whether she is to prepare luncheon for her or not; and it is *most* inconvenient."

Archie, as my readers will observe, was now thoroughly engrossed in Mrs. Brown's affairs, and took all her little troubles to heart, almost as much as she did herself.

Tucker suggested that Mrs. Brown should look at the train-book, and judge for herself by which train they were most likely to arrive.

But this proposal made Archie highly indignant. Was it possible that Tucker could have forgotten that he had told her Miss Lorrimer was going to *drive* all the way from her place in the country? so what *possible* use could there be in consulting the train-book!

Tucker, rather ruffled, retorted that she was not quite so mad about the coming lodgers as he was; that she had plenty to do without troubling her head about other people's affairs; and that therefore it was not very astonishing she should not remember every little thing he told her about them. That, moreover, it would be next to impossible to do so, as he was talking of them all day long.

This little "unpleasantness" was interrupted by the postman's knock, and Archie flew downstairs to see if there were any letters.

He returned, breathless, to say there were none for him or for Nell, but that there *was* one for Mrs. Brown, and that it was in Miss Lorrimer's handwriting!

Having delivered himself of this exciting piece of news, he waited three minutes and a half by the clock, to give Mrs. Brown time to read her letter, and then he rushed downstairs again.

He soon came tearing up, to say Miss Lorrimer was coming at half-past three; and that she required no luncheon, but an early tea with boiled eggs.

The eggs, said the letter, were not to be *hard* boiled, as Miss Lorrimer *must* not eat hard-boiled eggs; but then, on the other hand, they must not be *raw*, as in that case Miss Lorrimer *would* not eat them. They were to be "just set." That was the expression Miss Lorrimer used. There was to be toast and a brown loaf, but the breast must not be new. A mystery not cleared up was whether the "maid and housekeeper" was one and the same person or not.

It was impossible to tell by the arrangements of the rooms, as Miss Lorrimer had taken the whole house.

No, it could not be made out at all.

The mystery, Archie declared with delight, got deeper and deeper.

And that so rich, so grand, so particular a person as Miss Lorrimer should have received so little education as to write and spell so badly, was more mysterious still.

CHAPTER III.

MISS LORRIMER.

FROM the time that dinner was cleared away Archie began to watch the clock.

From the time the clock struck three he was up and down at the window.

The rain now came on more heavily than ever, and it was evident that poor Miss Lorrimer would have a very wet drive.

The outlook was cheerless, and Archie made up his mind he would not stay at the window any more. It was dull work watching the drizzling rain, and he should certainly not station himself for good at the window until twenty-five minutes past three. As Miss Lorrimer was such a punctual person, she would be sure to arrive to the minute. And she would not arrive sooner. It was just as

unpunctual, he observed to Nellie, to be *before* your time as to be *after* it, and Miss Lorrimer would not sin against punctuality in either respect.

So he took his pencil and paper, and began making a picture of Miss Lorrimer, to while away the time.

According to him, she was a hideous old lady with a poke bonnet, a red nose, and a pair of "pince-nez." She was represented sitting at the tea-table, turning up her nose in disgust at an egg which she was hitting hard with a spoon, and which evidently nothing but a hammer would break.

Nell was delighted with the portrait, but suggested corkscrew curls with little combs as an improvement. These were introduced with some difficulty, and then Archie set to work to paint his sketch.

He was in the middle of trying to make up his mind whether "vermilion" or "Indian red" would best represent the colour of poor Miss Lorrimer's nose, when the sound of wheels driving rapidly up to the door fell upon his ear.

It came so suddenly, and his lap was so full, that the vehicle had stopped, and the bell had rung before he could gain his feet.

Nell, who was sitting on the floor, also drawing, was in the same predicament; and so it happened

that, hurry and scramble as they might, they could not dispose of their paint-boxes and drawing materials in time, and reached the window only to see the open door of an empty fly, the late occupants of which had already entered the house.

Moans and groans of disappointment broke from both children, while Archie heaped abuse on the head of the unhappy Miss Lorrimer for her want of punctuality.

There was nothing to be done but to study the luggage on the top of the fly, and to try and gain therefrom some index as to the character of its owner.

It was all very neat and tidy. There were several boxes, surmounted by an enormous bath.

Archie was indignant at this. "How horrid!" he exclaimed; "how unkind to poor Mrs. Brown to suppose she hadn't plenty of baths in her house! How affected! to think you couldn't wash in any bath but your own!"

His opinion of poor Miss Lorrimer became worse than ever. Meantime the luggage was being removed from the fly, and the long-looked-for excitement seemed over. It had not been very exciting after all.

"It's rather a flat ending to all our anticipations," said Archie; "let's go on with our drawing."

As he said the words the sound of wheels driving up again fell on his ear, and before he had time to wonder, a smart little brougham with two horses dashed up, and the fly had to move on to let it stop at the door.

The horses were hot and smoking, and had evidently come a long way, and been driven very fast.

The footman opened the door, and a tall, lean figure dressed in black got out.

"Why, *this* must be Miss Lorrimer," exclaimed Archie, "and the maid and the housekeeper must have been in the fly with the luggage."

Tall and stately, and angular and prim, the figure he was watching disappeared into the house.

He turned his eyes back to the brougham, expecting to see it drive away.

But, to his surprise, the footman was still holding the door open, and it was evident there was still somebody to get out. Could this be the maid? and was the housekeeper in the fly? If so, it proved they were two people, and not one and the same.

To the astonishment of both children, and hardly less so to Tucker, who, her pride and indifference forgotten, was now eagerly looking on, there stepped out of the brougham a little girl not much older than Nell.

She had long wavy brown hair hanging over her shoulders, and she wore a long blue gauze veil, which completely hid her face from Archie and Nell's eager and prolonged scrutiny.

Here was indeed a mystery! Miss Lorrimer bringing a little girl with her! The whole thing was quite incomprehensible.

What in the world could Miss Lorrimer—prim, particular Miss Lorrimer—want with a little girl? She probably hated children, and would be a most strict and disagreeable companion.

The interest now rather left Miss Lorrimer, and centred on the little girl.

What relation could she be to Miss Lorrimer?

Niece, perhaps, or great-niece more likely; a little orphan adopted by a rich maiden lady, or a child whose parents were in India.

Archie felt sure she was an unhappy child, and thought perhaps she had been crying on the way, because Miss Lorrimer had been cross to her; and that therefore she had been obliged to pull down her veil to hide her poor swollen eyes.

For otherwise why should she have a blue gauze veil down when she was driving in a shut brougham?

He grew quite pathetic over the imaginary sorrows of that poor little girl.

"How I wish she could come to tea with us," he exclaimed, "instead of having to sit down with that cross old thing, with her 'just set' eggs and her 'stale brown bread'!"

Archie's imagination had now quite run away with him, and he was full of ideas about the little girl. That she was an unfortunate child, and that Miss Lorrimer was disagreeable to her, if not downright cruel, he felt quite sure.

"She looked so sad, didn't she?" he said at last, turning to Tucker.

A burst of laughter from both Tucker and Nell was his answer; and he had to be reminded that, owing to the blue veil, not one of them had caught a glimpse of her face, and that therefore it was impossible to say whether she looked sad or not.

Now Archie, like many other boys, did not at all like being an object of ridicule; and the laughter with which his remark was received hurt his dignity, and brought on a violent reaction in his feelings as regarded the new lodgers.

He turned away angrily from the window, and declared he was sick and tired of Miss Lorrimer and her concerns, and should take no further interest in them. What was she to him? and what did he care?

He went further. He began to assure Nell

gravely that he was not at all sure their mother would like it; nor whether she would not say, if she were here, that they were growing very "inquisitive" and "gossipy" about their neighbours' affairs. Anyhow, he felt sure she would say it was a great waste of time, and that they might be doing something much more useful. He was going to set to work at once. He did not know what Nell was going to do, but *he* was going to learn some French poetry. He had promised his mother to do so if ever he had any spare time, and he certainly had that now.

So saying, Archie seized his sketch of Miss Lorimer, crumpled it up, and threw it into the empty fireplace, put away his paint-box, and emptied the paint-water out of the window; and then went off to his own bed-room with an expression of great dignity on his countenance, and his French poetry-book in his hand.

CHAPTER IV.

ARCHIE'S RESOLUTION.

NELL was rather silent and depressed after Archie was gone. She knew by experience that when he was in one of these moods it was hopeless to get him round.

She understood him perhaps better than he did himself, and she knew quite well that the real motive of what he was saying and doing was not the one he fancied.

He quite imagined—for he easily deceived himself—that he was acting from a very high motive, that of pleasing his mother and keeping his promise to her. Whereas Nell knew quite well that he was put out because she and Tucker had laughed at him.

She much regretted having done so, but it had really been impossible to help it. And she knew now that all fun was over, and that all the speculations and other amusements had come to an end for some time at least. It was probable, indeed almost certain, that he would come round in the end, but for the present he would be inflexible.

And she was very sorry, for it had all been so amusing, and she could not go on with it by herself. Nothing was amusing unless Archie joined in it, or rather set it going. For Nell had not his imagination nor his power of making friends easily. She was not a bit like Archie. It would never have occurred to her to go and make friends with the landlady as he had done. She was much shyer, and had less confidence in herself, and she always hung back and let him take the lead in everything. Still she enjoyed immensely hearing all he had to say on his return, and was now quite as much interested in Miss Lorrimer as he was.

She was particularly sorry to see Miss Lorrimer's picture thrown away, because she thought Archie had done it so well. She went to the fireplace and picked the crumpled paper out of the grate, to see if anything could be done with it, because she thought that some other time, when he would be in a different frame of mind, he might be glad to see it again.

So she smoothed it out on the table, and found that, though much creased, it was still complete.

She wrote "Miss Lorrimer" under it in large letters, and then put it away in the table drawer, with a book upon it to act as a weight.

It was now nearly tea-time. Archie did not

emerge from his retreat until it was ready. Nell looked anxiously at him to see if his mood had changed; but she was doomed to disappointment.

The case was even worse than she had expected. For his first words were that he had made up his mind to pay the landlady no more visits, and to ask no more questions about Miss Lorrimer. He was about to add that he had "formed a resolution" *never* to mention her name again, but Nell interrupted him, and begged him not.

Archie was very fond of what he called "forming a resolution," and Nell knew how difficult those sort of hasty resolutions were to *keep*, though they were easy enough to *make*, or, as Archie more pompously said, to "form."

She did not feel it would be possible for Archie to keep this one, and therefore she felt it would be far better not to make it. If once made, it *ought* to be kept.

"You know, Archie," she said, "the name has been in our mouths so constantly that it has become like saying 'yes' or 'no,' or 'I' and 'me;' and you know by that game how difficult that is."

I dare say the reader is acquainted with the game in question, and if so he will be able to enter into Nell's feelings. If not, I may say that it consists in being asked every sort of question about

oneself, one's opinions, habits, tastes, &c., and yet in answering, one is not allowed to say "I," "me," "my," "mine," "yes," or "no."

Every time the words slip out one has to pay a forfeit.

Archie very sensibly took his sister's advice; only remarking that he should *try* at any rate not to mention her name for that evening.

Nell was particularly sorry at his announcement that he should pay the landlady no more visits. She was afraid Mrs. Brown would be hurt at the very sudden cessation of Archie's almost hourly calls, and would think she had done something to offend him. A day or two before, a little event had occurred which had shown Nell that Mrs. Brown "had her feelings," as the expression is, and was easily offended.

After tea, Archie announced his intention of again retiring to his room to finish learning his poetry; and not all poor Nell's entreaties that he would go down and have just *one little* talk with the landlady had any effect.

"I think poor Mrs. Brown will think it *so* odd," she urged.

But Archie was not to be moved, and, possessing himself once more of his French poetry-book, he marched off to his little bedroom.

Left alone in the sitting-room, Nell began gradually making up her mind to what was to her a very great effort.

She would go down and talk to the landlady herself.

I must give her all the credit which really was her due.

It was chiefly out of sheer kindness of heart and consideration for Mrs. Brown's feeling that she wanted to go.

She felt sure Mrs. Brown would be thinking she had offended Archie.

On that previous occasion to which I have alluded, Archie had brushed by Mrs. Brown on the stairs without saying "good morning," and Mrs. Brown had at once come to Nell and Tucker, and said she hoped she had not "offended the young gentleman in any way."

And poor Nell had to enter into a long and elaborate explanation of how very forgetful Archie was in such matters; how that he did not mean to be rude, but that he did unfortunately sometimes quite forget his "good mornings" and "good nights" and "how-do-you-dos."

How that it was owing to his not having "good manners," and how she had often heard her father say that his manners would improve when he went

to Eton; as that all the boys there were remarkable for their "good manners," as well as for their "tidiness in dress."

As, however, Archie had not yet even been to a preparatory school, there was still a long space of time stretching in front, before they could hope to see much improvement; and, in the meantime, she hoped the landlady would overlook it, and would remember it *was* "bad manners," and not wilful rudeness or unkindness.

Now Nell did not want to go through all this again; for even with Tucker's assistance the scene had been long and trying in the extreme.

So she made up her mind that she would take the bull by the horns, and go and talk to the landlady herself, and make some excuse to cover Archie's apparent neglect. Her resolution "formed," she at once acted upon it. She rose from her chair, drew herself up with the air of a person who has made up his mind to something, which, though disagreeable, *must* be done, and then she ran downstairs very quickly, so as not to give herself time to think about it, or to falter in her determination.

About twenty minutes later Archie was roused from the study of "Le Corbeau et le Renard" by his sister's voice at the door, speaking in tones of great though suppressed excitement, "Archie!

Archie! *do* come back; I've got something to tell you!"

Archie needed no second bidding. He felt sure by the sound of Nell's voice that she had discovered something interesting, and his resolution was forgotten. Down went the "Corbeau et le Renard," and he was at the door in an instant.

Nell was standing outside waiting for him, and she drew him eagerly into the sitting-room, and shut the door behind her.

"Well, Archie," she said breathlessly, "I've found it all out, and we're all wrong, *quite* wrong in our guesses from beginning to end. First of all, the tall, stiff person is not Miss Lorrimer at all! She is the 'maid and housekeeper.' A very, very grand person, Mrs. Brown says, the housekeeper of Lorrimer Hall."

"Then where in the world *is* Miss Lorrimer?" interrupted Archie, looking utterly bewildered. "Did she never come at all? or is she hiding in the house? I see it all!" he suddenly exclaimed; "she must have arrived in the fly! And one of our guesses *is* right. She is, as we first thought, a poor mad lady who has to be kept out of sight, and they hurried her out of the fly for fear she should do something strange. And depend upon it, Nell, that stiff, angular person is her *keeper*."

She looks just like one! And calling her "maid and housekeeper" is just a blind. What she really is, is '*maid and keeper*,' don't you see? And poor mad Miss Lorrimer is hidden away in the house, and we haven't seen her yet. I say, Nell, how frightened mamma would be if she knew we were living almost in the same house as a lunatic!"

Nell's only answer was to jump about the room with delight, clapping her hands and laughing.

"Go on! go on," she said, "*do* go on. It is such fun to hear you, when you are so wrong; so *very* far from hitting the right nail on the head. Archie, let's make a game out of it. You go on guessing, and I'll say 'hot' or 'cold,' as you get nearer or farther away from the truth."

But here Archie's dignity reasserted itself, and he utterly declined to do anything of the sort.

Nell, in alarm that he was going to mount his high horse again, and bring all fun to an end once more, capitulated directly, and hastily offered to tell him all she had heard without further parley.

Archie closed with this offer, for he was really longing to hear, though he made it a condition that she should tell him in brief, and not, as he rather rudely said, "make a long prosy rigmarole about it."

"Well," said Nell, "we *have* seen Miss Lorrimer. She is *not* mad, and she did *not* arrive in the fly.

Archie, it is *the little girl with the blue veil* who is Miss Lorrimer!"

Nell was well rewarded for all her trouble by Archie's burst of unfeigned astonishment. It took him fully three minutes to take it in; and even then he was full of little ideas which he thought proved Nell might be mistaken.

"Those letters!" he said, "do you remember the letters? Is it likely a little girl would write those pompous letters, about 'punctual to a minute,' and 'spotlessly clean,' and all about what she *could* not eat, and *must* not eat——?"

"Just what I said to Mrs. Brown," said Nell triumphantly. "And then she said the rooms were taken, and the letters written *by* the maid and housekeeper *in* Miss Lorrimer's name. Mrs. Brown fancies she is an orphan heiress, and that this person has the charge of her. But she knows nothing for certain, because Mrs. Jorrocks, as she is called, is much too grand to talk to *her*, Mrs. Brown says."

"Well, there's not much that's interesting after all," said Archie; "there's nothing much more mysterious in a little girl coming here with her maid than in you and I coming with Tucker."

"Oh yes, Archie!" said Nell, eagerly; "there are still two mysteries left. First, who can a little girl be who *lives* alone with her maid, and has

rooms taken in her own name? and then, why does she wear a blue veil?"

"There's nothing in that," said Archie; "she tans easily, I suppose."

"Tans! Archie!" exclaimed Nell, "on a cloudy wet day like yesterday, and in a brougham!"

"Oh, well, bother!" said Archie, "I'm sure I don't care. Don't let's talk about her any more, Nell. You've made me break my resolution, and we're becoming as gossipy and inquisitive as ever. Now I'm determined I won't mention her name again."

Poor Nell went to the window and stood watching the rain, feeling much depressed. I think Archie felt a little compunction at the sight of her grave, disappointed little face; for after a few minutes he suddenly proposed they should divert their thoughts by playing at that very game of "yes" and "no," "I" and "my," to which allusion has already been made.

Nell gladly assented, and Tucker also joined.

The evening, under these conditions, sped away very quickly, and they retired to bed without having once mentioned, or in the most distant way alluded to, the late heroine of all their talk and surmises.

CHAPTER V.

PAUL PRY.

It is not to be supposed, after all his excitement and speculations about his next-door neighbours, that Archie had really given up thinking about them.

On the contrary, he thought about them all the more for not talking about them.

While Nell had imagined him to be learning his poetry the book had been upside down on his lap, and his thoughts recurring to the same topic.

But still he was determined to stick to his resolution, and to Nell's great disappointment he came down to breakfast as full of it as ever.

She tried several times during the repast to bring on the forbidden subject, but whenever she did so Archie maintained a stony silence.

Once, and once only, did he nearly break down.

As he was holding out his cup and saucer to Tucker for some more tea, the sound of a little girl's voice just outside the window suddenly fell on his ear.

He started so violently that the cup rattled and spun in the saucer, and his face got crimson.

But he sat quite still.

Nell dashed back her chair and ran to the window.

"Come quick! oh! come quick, Archie!" she exclaimed; "little Miss Lorrimer and the maid-and-housekeeper are both here, just starting for the beach. There isn't a scrap of sun anywhere, and a high wind blowing, and she has got her blue veil down, just as she had it in the brougham last night. *Do* come and see."

But no, Archie would not move. He was longing to look, but his pride made him refuse himself the gratification.

Nell turned from the window, and came back to her breakfast.

"She must get up a great deal earlier than we do," she said; "we've not done our breakfast, and she's already out walking."

"I've nearly done," said Archie, "and I think we'd better follow her example, and go out on the beach."

He had hardly said the words before the weather, which was looking very threatening, clouded completely over, and a sharp squall set in.

"Now's our time," said Archie, running to the window, and forgetting his pride in the excitement of the moment; "she'll have to come home again,

and if she keeps her veil down in this storm, I shall agree that there *is* a mystery about her."

They both stood at the window, looking eagerly out. They had not long to wait.

Little Miss Lorrimer was soon seen flying home, trying to hold up an umbrella, followed at a little distance by the prim personage we must now call Mrs. Jorrocks.

But in spite of the torrents of rain, in spite of the wind which blew it about like a flag, and made it stream alongside her as she ran, the blue veil was over her face.

"Very extraordinary!" muttered Archie, and Nell was delighted to think there was still a mystery left.

But as the two figures disappeared into the house Archie became bored with himself, and annoyed with Nell at finding he had again broken his resolution.

A change was, however, given to both his and Nelly's thoughts by the arrival of the post with a letter from their mother.

She spoke of the journey to Scotland, now not much more than a fortnight distant and of all the things they would do when they got home; and the children were so occupied with talking about Castle Forbes during the day, that it was quite easy for Archie to keep his resolution.

The next day was lovely, and they were able to resume their outdoor life.

Of course they saw little Miss Lorrimer out of doors, and passed her once or twice in the course of the day quite close; but though they looked at her as hard as they could without being rude, they could not get a glimpse of her face. The blue veil was very thick, and it was always down.

She looked very dull. She never seemed to have any fun. She never went scrambling on the rocks, or paddling in the sea. She was always either walking primly by Mrs. Jorrocks's side on the Esplanade, or sitting up stiffly by her in a fly.

Archie said nothing more about her, and Nell also left the subject alone.

She thought he was perhaps disappointed at the flat ending to all his imaginative speculations.

But it was not so. Archie, far from being disappointed, was more certain than ever that there was something very mysterious about little Miss Lorrimer; and though he was ashamed, after all his resolutions, to talk her over with Nell, he was always thinking about her, and longing to discover what he called in his own mind the "mystery of the blue veil."

He had now got it into his head that the little girl had some deformity on her face which she

wanted to hide, though of what nature he could not quite make up his mind—a hare-lip perhaps, or no nose, or some dreadful scar right across her face.

He was sure that she was otherwise a pretty child, and a nice child. He had taken quite a fancy to her. She had a pleasant voice and pretty hair, and a nice upright figure. She walked well, and held up her head far better than either he or Nell, in spite of all their gymnasium lessons in London.

It seemed *such* a pity she should have a deformity on her face.

Perhaps it was *only* a chilblain on the tip of her nose; and, if so, she would get rid of it in time. Still, it would be no doubt very unbecoming for the present, and she was very sensible to wear a blue veil.

He hoped it might be this, but still he felt he was hoping against hope. It was so much more likely that it was something much worse.

The weather had now turned very hot, and the despised back garden became a favourite resort.

To Archie it had this attraction, that he could see into the open windows of Miss Lorrimer's rooms.

If she came near the open window, he would be able to see her, and indoors, *surely* she could not have on her veil!

Archie bathed before breakfast, but it had proved

to be too tiring for Nell. So she and Tucker went down about eleven.

Archie was therefore left alone for an hour and a half at this time; and he generally spent it in the little back garden.

Quite apart from the hope of catching sight of Miss Lorrimer, the big tree in the back garden was very attractive to him.

Perched up on the branches, he could sit and read in the greatest comfort, and see without being seen.

He was so completely concealed up there, that any one might come and sit on the seat under the tree without discovering his hiding-place.

He found, however, that it was not much use taking his book. His near neighbourhood to Miss Lorrimer's rooms completely distracted his mind, and set his thoughts wondering and speculating.

The old "Corbeau et le Renard," at which he was still hammering, made no progress, and the wish to discover what lay under the blue veil took complete possession of him.

His last idea was that the little girl had got a pig's face. He had heard or read of such a thing, and he had now made up her story in his own mind.

She had a pig's face, no doubt, and her rela-

tions were so ashamed of her that they made her live alone with her "maid and housekeeper."

She was very rich of course, the owner of Lorrimer Hall, an orphan heiress; but no one would live with her, or have anything to do with her, because she had a pig's face. It was very sad, he thought. He began to wonder if he should have been the same to a relation with a pig's face, if he had had one. He felt so kindly disposed to little Miss Lorrimer, that he assured himself he didn't believe he should mind; as long as he had not got to kiss her; he must draw a line there. You couldn't, how could you? kiss a pig; it would be so very difficult, even if you didn't mind it so very much. He shut his eyes, and tried to imagine how any of his own relations would look if afflicted in a similar manner. He thought first of his mother, but dismissed the thought immediately. It gave him quite a turn to think of it. Then Nell. Bringing it so near home, he quite saw that though he should still be very fond of her, and be as kind to her as possible, he should certainly be in favour of her wearing a blue veil.

Oh, how he would like to peep under that veil of Miss Lorrimer's, and find out once for all what the mystery was! Hardly a mystery now, though, for he felt very sure he had come to the real truth at last.

He had reached this point in his meditations one morning, as he sat up in the tree, when —— a slight sound of footsteps fell on his ear, and little Miss Lorrimer with a book in her hand came into the garden!

She looked up at their windows, and all round about, and then, apparently satisfied that she was quite alone, she advanced to the seat under the tree, and sat down. Archie's heart beat so loudly that he was quite afraid the tree would shake, and lead to his discovery. He was much excited. For he had a wild hope now that she would put up her veil. Surely, on a hot day like this, the heat and stuffiness of that blue veil must be insupportable. She evidently found it so. He heard her constantly drawing long breaths, and once she said "Oh dear!" as if she were stifled.

Suddenly she got up, looked all round her again, up at the windows, everywhere, and then she called out, "Dear Jorrocks, the children are out, and there is no one about. Don't you think I might put up my veil for a little? I do so long for a puff of air in my face, and there is not a creature to see."

An answer came from within, apparently giving permission; and little Miss Lorrimer, reseating herself under the tree, threw up her veil.

What a moment for Archie! he felt so excited that he didn't know what to do.

But, to his disgust, he found he could see her no better than before. Peering down through the branches, he only saw the top of her hat, and the blue veil flowing over her shoulders. Her head was bent over her book, and her shady hat fell over her face.

It was too tantalizing. One moment he had a wild desire to jump down from his perch, and to appear face to face with her before she had time either to run away or to pull down her veil.

But on second thought he felt this would not be quite fair. If she *had* a pig's face, of course she was very shy about it, and it would not be right to take advantage of her in an unguarded, unveiled moment.

He felt it would be rather like a person who is overhearing a conversation not intended for him; and he remembered his mother once telling him that in such a case it was right for the concealed person to make known his or her near neighbourhood directly, so as to prevent anything being said that he or she was not intended to hear.

According to this, he ought, before he descended, to shout out, "Holloa! Look out! I'm coming down from the tree!"

And if he did that, of course she would pull down her veil directly; so what would be the use of it?

He therefore gave up the idea, and sat very still on his perch, wondering what would happen next.

By-and-by Mrs. Jorrocks came to the sitting-room window and said, "How cool and comfortable you look, my dear, in that nice shady place!"

"I am," answered the little girl; "it's delicious here with my veil up. I feel as if I should go to sleep."

Jorrocks nodded and smiled approval, and disappeared from the window.

Archie was once again filled with hope.

It seemed to him that if little Miss Lorrimer went to sleep, there would not be the same objection to his jumping down and looking at her as there had been when she was awake. She could not, he told himself, feel shy if she knew nothing about it.

His mind was made up, he would wait till she was asleep, and then —— then at last should he discover the mystery of the blue veil.

He listened eagerly to what was going on below him, and it became evident that she was getting sleepy. Not a sound was heard, not a leaf of her

book was turned over, he even fancied the head and hat were falling lower over the book.

Suddenly it slipped from her hands and fell to the ground, but she made no attempt to pick it up, and it was evident she had not discovered its loss. The case was clear. The supreme moment had come; Miss Lorrimer was asleep!

Now or never!

Trembling with excitement, Archie laid his poetry-book on the biggest bough, rose cautiously from his perch, and prepared to descend. Like a thief he crept from bough to bough, fearful that every shake of the branches under his weight might rouse the sleeper and spoil everything at the last moment. He breathed short and quick, his hands shook, and his heart beat loudly. And now he was standing with one foot on the very bench occupied by the little girl. He stopped for a minute and looked at her.

She was so fast asleep that her head had fallen against the back of the seat, and was turned right away.

The veil and her long hair half-covered the lower part of her face.

He saw he would have to stoop right over her to get a good sight of her. He might even have to

push away the veil. Should he accomplish all this without waking her? He must try.

He got down his other foot from the branch, and dropped gently on to the ground.

Then he crept round on tip-toe till he was standing over the little sleeper.

With one hand he put back the long blue veil and with the other supported himself by the arm of the bench on which her head was resting, while he stooped over her and eagerly scanned what he could see of her face.

He bent over till his back nearly broke, going so near that his face almost touched hers and he could feel her breath on his cheek. He gazed and scanned, scanned and gazed.

And he saw——!

Well! he saw a very pretty little girl. He saw long black eyelashes resting on a smooth pink cheek; red lips parted with a smile, as though the sleeper dreamt of pleasant things, and a small neat nose. No pig's face! no scar! no hare-lip! no chilblain even! nothing!

He could discover nothing wrong, no deformity or blemish of any kind.

But he had not time to scan very carefully; for a curious sound of "flop, flop" up in the tree startled him, and before he had time to consider what it

could be, down came the "Corbeau et le Renard," hop, hopping from branch to branch, and finally falling with a great thud right on the top of Miss Lorrimer and from thence to the ground.

She woke with a start, and her dreamy bewildered gaze fixed itself first up in the tree, and then on the form standing at her side, or rather, I should say, on the vacant space where the form had been.

For Archie, directly he saw her beginning to wake, lost his presence of mind entirely, and, snatching up the luckless poetry-book which was lying at her feet, he fairly turned tail and ran into the house as fast as his legs could carry him, with a wild hope that before she was thoroughly awake he would be out of sight.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FRENCH POETRY-BOOK.

ARCHIE regained the sitting-room, feeling thoroughly ashamed of himself. He saw now that he had done, if not a mean, certainly a rude, ungentleman-like thing.

Oh! what *would* she think of him if she had, even for a moment, been sufficiently awake to see him at her side and guess what he had been doing! And how flat it all was too!

There was no mystery whatever—none.

And yet it was rather a relief, too, to think she had not got a pig's face under her veil. He was glad for her sake and glad for his own.

It was such a very nice face that it was pleasant to think of it.

But the more he thought of her and her face, and the more he liked what he thought of it, the more annoyed he felt with himself for what he had done.

It certainly *was* very rude, and she must, if she were awake enough to realise what was going on, think him a rude, vulgar, odious boy; and he found

how very much he should dislike her having such an opinion of him.

He was glad to think he had had the presence of mind to pick up his poetry-book.

Fancy, had he left it there, what a fatal witness it would have been against him, with "Archibald Forbes, his book," written inside!

He began wondering what sort of an opinion she would have formed of him by looking at his book.

"Dirty and untidy," he was afraid would have been her verdict, had she turned to certain well-thumbed pages and more especially to the page whereon a certain poem entitled "Le Corbeau et le Renard" was to be found.

There were sundry rhymes, too, on the title-page.

This book is one thing
My fist is another,
Touch not the one
For fear of the other.

Or again,

Archie Forbes is my name,
Scotland is my nation,
Castle-Forbes my dwelling-place,
A pleasant habitation.

He blushed as he thought of all this nonsense, and wondered what she would have thought if she had read it.

He did not know why, but he was rather anxious she should form a good opinion of him. But he was afraid there was but little chance of that now.

He had hardly any hope that she had not seen him and guessed his object.

He flung himself into a chair disgusted with himself and with everybody else, and sank into a fit of gloom and depression, in which everything appeared to him in the blackest light.

What an unhappy, ill-used boy he was! His dear friend was going to leave him, and his Highland home would never again be to him what it had been before! He had done a mean and ungentleman-like action, and lowered himself in his own eyes, and perhaps in those of a very nice little girl, whose good opinion he was most anxious to gain. Nell and Tucker were amusing themselves out of doors, quite forgetting how dull *he* must be all by himself. There was not a bright spot anywhere!

What cure could he find for his sorrow?

To what refuge could he fly?

Once more the old remedy, the last resource, the "Corbeau et le Renard."

He would—yes he *would*—finish learning it

now, once for all; learn it right off, and so at least feel he was pleasing *somebody*.

He took up the French poetry-book, and opened it at one of the fly-leaves. He looked at it in astonishment, stared at it, looked again.

"I never wrote those lines," he exclaimed; "I never even heard them before! Who *can* have written them in my French poetry-book?"

The lines were as follows:—

If thou art borrowed by a friend,
Right welcome shalt thou be
To read, to study, *not* to lend,
But to return to me.
Not that imparted knowledge doth
Diminish learning's store,
But books, I find, if often lent,
Return to me no more.

Bewildered, Archie turned back the fly-leaf to the title-page.

Yes. There it was. His own French poetry-book, "Les Poètes Français, par Antonin Roche," all right enough.

But—but—what can it mean?

He rubbed his eyes, as if to make himself see more clearly.

Instead of

ARCHIBALD FORBES,
His book,

there was written

PHYLLIS LORRIMER.

Archie blushed till his ears tingled as the truth dawned upon him.

He had brought away the wrong book!

In his hurry and confusion he had picked up Miss Lorrimer's book, which, the reader will remember, had fallen to the ground when she first fell asleep, and had left his book still lying at her feet in its stead, a fatal witness against him!

Hot and red all over, he wondered what he could do. He was completely in Miss Lorrimer's hands now, and if she chose to tell everyone in the house, everyone in Sandbank, how rude he had been! She could!

But the interest of having something of Miss Lorrimer's in his possession, and the strange coincidence of her being engaged in the study of the same book, for a moment distracted him, and he re-opened the book to see if he could discover what she had been learning. He was quite affected to find a mark in the "Corbeau et le Renard." What an extraordinary coincidence!

The very same bit as himself!

"But, oh dear! oh dear!" he exclaimed out loud, "what *am* I to do with it? What is to happen next? How am I to give it her back, and what

will she do about giving mine back to me, when she finds out the mistake?"

He got hot all over again, thinking of the mess he had got into, and went to the open window to cool himself.

He saw in the distance Nell and Tucker coming home from their bathing, and felt no time must be lost.

He must do something with it before they arrived.

He ran into his own room, which looked out on the back garden, with a faint hope that Miss Lorrimer might have dropped off to sleep again, and he might have a chance of exchanging the book.

But the garden was empty, and there was nothing lying on the ground near the seat.

It was evident that she had gone in, and taken the book with her.

What *was* he to do?

Nell and Tucker would be here directly, and he *must* conceal the strange poetry-book from their prying eyes.

Conceive the shower of questions, if by chance they got hold of it, and saw the name "Phyllis Lorrimer" written inside it!

He must put it *somewhere* before they came in. But where? He tried his coat-pocket, but that did not do at all.

It stuck out, and made him look so fat they would notice it directly.

Every place he thought of was liable to be visited by either Nell or Tucker.

"It's rather hard," he muttered, "I haven't a private place in the world; not a hole in this wide world that I can call my very own!"

At last he jumped hastily up, for footsteps were heard outside, and, running into his own room, he buried the book deep under his clean shirts in the drawer, and, hurriedly re-entering the sitting-room, tried to look as unconcerned as possible.

But he was so unused to act a part, or to deceit of any kind, that he felt most uncomfortable, and very cross and irritable.

Poor innocent Nell ran gaily in, and, coming straight up to him, asked him how he had amused himself in her absence, and if he had sat up in the tree for a long time after she left, &c., and got violently snubbed for her pains.

What was it to her? And why did she ask so many questions? Her whole conversation now was made up of questions. It was a most stupid habit, and made her conversation very dull.

Poor Nelly looked most crestfallen, and said she wouldn't do it if he didn't like it; but that she really had not meant any harm. She had, honestly

and truly, wanted to know, because she had been so afraid he might have been dull. She had got so interested in her swimming, that she had been rather longer than usual.

Tucker here broke in rather indignantly, and told Archie he had no right to be so disagreeable to his sister. Poor Miss Nell had deprived herself of some of her swimming because she wanted to hurry home to him, and this was all the thanks she got.

Archie, rather ashamed of himself, made an effort to shake off his irritability.

But Nell's next remark brought it all back again.

"Archie," she said, "I want the French poetry-book. Can you tell me where I shall find it?"

"The French poetry-book!" he exclaimed in dismay; "what in the world do you want that for?"

"To learn some French poetry," she answered.

"But why should you want to learn it at this particular moment?" he persisted, his manner getting very excited, and his voice rather loud.

"It's so difficult to find anything to do," she said piteously; "you won't let me talk on any subject, and——"

"How do you mean?" interrupted Archie, anxious to distract her mind from the French poetry.

"I'm sure I'm quite ready to talk on any subject you like."

"But you're *not*, Archie," she said. "I mayn't talk about Lady Maggie's wedding; I mayn't talk about little Miss Lorrimer; and now I mayn't even ask you what you've been doing this morning to amuse yourself. So there's no safe subject left except French poetry."

"Talk of anything but French poetry," said Archie hastily.

"Not even *that*," exclaimed poor Nell, turning round in amazement. "Why, then, this is another forbidden subject. Oh, Archie! what has come to you? I really think you must be ill. You are so very odd."

Tucker evidently thought so too; for she gave him a searching glance as she left the room, and then said, "The heat's been too much for you, Master Archie. I think I shall give you a cooling dose to-night."

It struck Archie as so ridiculous that he should be given a dose to cure him of not wanting to produce the French poetry-book, that, in spite of 'feeling so much the reverse of gay, he couldn't help laughing.

Poor Nell, however, looked more inclined to cry; and Archie, stricken with remorse, made another

effort to overcome his irritability, and began to talk to her about her swimming. A little cheerful conversation ensued, until Nell unfortunately stumbled on one of the forbidden subjects.

She felt she was on dangerous ground; but she had got a bit of interesting information, and she could not help imparting it.

"Archie," she said, "do you know I heard a bathing-machine being ordered for Miss Lorrimer for every day next week at the same hour as me; so, as she can't bathe in a blue veil, there won't be a mystery much longer!"

"There's no mystery at all," said Archie, peevishly, "it's the greatest mistake to suppose there ever was."

He said this so decidedly, that Nell stopped short and stared at him.

"Why, Archie," she said, "have you found anything out?"

Archie saw the admission he had made, and got very red.

He was annoyed with himself for being so stupid, and doubly annoyed at having got into such a mess, that he could not speak out.

He hated the feeling of having something to hide.

He got more and more cross, and Nelly more

and more puzzled. And he ended by leaving the room in a huff, and banging the door after him.

He took refuge in his own little bedroom, locked the door, and threw himself on the bed, full of melancholy reflections.

He was not left long in peace. Tucker came rattling at the door.

"What do you want? You can't come in," he called out.

"I must come in, Master Archie," said Tucker, "to put away your shirts, which have just come home from the wash."

With an exclamation of impatience, Archie opened the door, and Tucker entered with her arms full of clean linen.

But she had hardly opened the drawer before something between a shriek and a shout broke from Archie, and caused Tucker to start so violently that the clean shirts fell out of her arms on the floor.

"Master Archie," she cried, "whatever is the matter? Oh dear! oh dear! my poor heart."

She stood, panting, with her hand on her left side.

But Archie, I regret to say, showed no sympathy with her or her poor heart.

He only rushed to the open drawer, and dug

out something from its depths which he thrust into the breast of his jacket.

"Not a hole," he muttered between his teeth, "not one spot on the wide, wide world, that I can keep to myself."

Then, without a word of apology to Tucker, he banged out of the room.

"The boy *can't* be well," said Tucker to herself. "I never knew him so strange and disagreeable before. It's the heat, no doubt. I shall certainly give him some Gregory to-night."

Meanwhile, Archie, standing outside the door in the passage, was in that uncomfortable predicament that will be familiar to any of my readers who have ever left a room in a huff, banging the door after them.

Such, probably, know by their own experience how very difficult it is to get in again with any sort of dignity.

Once on the wrong side of the door, a re-entrance seems almost impossible. And Archie was in a double difficulty, for he had left the sitting-room in a huff with Nell, and now he had left the bed-room in a huff with Tucker. So that he was positively reduced to the staircase.

At any other time he would have sought refuge

in the tree in the back garden, but it had now become a hideous recollection, and he felt he should never care to sit there again. What should he do?

Well, he must trust to Nell's kindness and forgiving disposition, and return to the sitting-room as if nothing had happened.

Many sisters, he knew, would receive a huffy brother in his difficulty with jeers and laughter, or, perhaps, cold silence and contempt.

But Nell was a generous little thing, and never visited his tempers upon him.

So he determined to go in and try to be more kind and patient with her, even if she did talk upon forbidden subjects.

He would propose some excursion for the afternoon, and try to make things pleasant again. He opened the door and began in as nonchalant a voice as he could assume, "Oh, by the way, Nell, I have a plan——"

But the room was empty.

So his little piece of acting was thrown away.

It was rather a relief all the same, because of the French poetry-book. Nell might have noticed his pocket stuck out, even if he had, as he intended, kept that side of his person turned from her.

But it would have been a great anxiety.

It was much pleasanter to have the room to himself. He wanted to think what he was to do about the French poetry-book, how to return it to Miss Lorrimer, and how to get back his own.

By this time, he thought, she must have discovered she had got the wrong book.

Perhaps—oh, horror!—she would send it back with a message; then *everything* would come out!

Oh dear! what a muddle he had got into! and he, too, who so hated concealment. Here he was entangled in a web of deceit.

Why was not his mother here? He always told her everything. He felt he could not bear it any longer. He must write and tell her all about it. And she would advise him what to do.

He got out his desk and began to write. In his excitement and flurry he wrote a most strange and bewildering account of all that had happened, in which pretty little girls and French poetry-books and mysteries and pigs' faces and sitting up in trees were so strangely mixed, that his mother would have been hopelessly confused if she had ever received it. But the letter was destined never to be sent.

For when Archie read it over he found he could not understand it himself! He could not make head or tail of it.

In despair he tore it up and fell to thinking what he was to do next.

Little Miss Lorrimer's voice outside, talking to Jorrocks, roused him with a start from his reverie.

He went to the window and saw she was just starting in a fly, and, from what he heard said to the driver, he gathered it was to be a long drive, and he breathed more freely. It was evident the change of books had not been discovered. She must have put it by without opening it, and would very likely not open it again till to-morrow at the same hour.

He need not bother himself any more to-day. It would be time enough when to-morrow came.

He should just find a safe place for the poetry-book and then go and propose to Nell some nice expedition to change his thoughts.

He returned to his bed-room as soon as he heard Tucker leave it, put the book into his empty portmanteau under the bed, and then went to seek his sister.

Kind, forgiving Nell received him as if nothing had happened, and readily joined in his plan. So directly after dinner they started for a long ramble on the cliffs and did not return till nearly six.

That night, as Archie was just comfortably tucked up in bed with the French poetry-book, for

more security, under his pillow, the door rather slowly opened, and Tucker came in with a glass of something in one hand and a piece of toffee in the other. She advanced to his bedside, and Archie raised himself on his elbow and gazed at her with astonishment and bewilderment.

"What in the world have you got there, Tucker?" he exclaimed.

He was not left long in doubt. Astonishment changed to disgust and indignation as his nose and eyes at the same moment told him what the contents of the glass were. And he threw himself on the pillow with his face turned to the wall, uttering an expression of horror.

"Take it away!" he exclaimed. "What in the world do you want to dose me for? I'm quite well."

"No, you're not, Master Archie; you don't know it, but you're not the thing at all, and haven't been for some days. So come, be a good boy and drink it up, and you'll feel ever so much better to-morrow."

"But I never felt better in my life," said Archie; and he couldn't help laughing when he thought how wide Tucker was of the mark. "I assure you you're all wrong, Tucker. I was cross this afternoon, I know, but I'm not a bit ill. If I took six quarts of Gregory it wouldn't make any difference."

"Well, but it's the heat made you cross," urged Tucker, "and this will cool you and make you all right."

"Heat! nonsense!" said Archie; "my temper was a little hot, but that was all, I do assure you. Now Tucker, do believe me and take your horrid stuff away, for I can tell you I'm not going to drink it."

Tucker began to waver. He certainly did look very well. She looked at his tongue, felt his head, his pulse, and finally, to Archie's great relief, gave in and left him in peace, satisfied that his tongue was good and his skin quite cool and comfortable.

CHAPTER VII.

SECRET COMMUNICATIONS.

ARCHIE woke early the next morning, and lay meditating on his difficulties.

If little Miss Lorrimer did not learn her poetry until the same hour as she had done yesterday, the discovery of the wrong book would not be made until after eleven, and Tucker and Nell would be bathing, and he should have the house to himself.

But if she learnt it earlier everything would be much more difficult.

What steps, he wondered, would she take?

Would she send it back with a note or a message, waiting for an answer? Should he be able to intercept that note or that message, or would the tactless Mrs. Brown bring it right into the room before Nell and Tucker?

He felt quite agitated at the thought.

Oh, how he deplored the fatal curiosity which had brought so heavy a burden of concealment and anxiety upon him!

Never in his life had he had a horrid fidgeting secret of this kind before, and the position was as strange as it was disagreeable.

On the other hand, if Nell and Tucker were out of the way, it would be rather exciting having this little communication with Miss Lorrimer. She *might*, perhaps, ask to see him and give him the book herself; and then ever after there would be a little acquaintance between them.

His reflections were interrupted by the arrival of his bath water, and he had to get up.

All the morning he was nervous and jumpy, starting at the sound of voices or footsteps, or the ringing of any bell.

To make matters worse, he found Nell was not going to bathe till twelve o'clock to-day, as Tucker was too busy to go earlier. So that all hope of having the house to himself at the hour when he

thought Miss Lorrimer would learn her French poetry was at an end.

He tried not to be cross and snubby to Nell and Tucker (chiefly, I am afraid, because he did not want to arouse their suspicions), but I cannot say he succeeded very well.

Tucker was inwardly regretting she had not insisted on his taking the Gregory; and Nell had given him up as a hopeless job, and was adopting the plan of leaving him to himself, and not talking to him at all, since nothing she said appeared to please him.

The clock struck eleven, and Archie started as if he were Cinderella at the ball.

"Oh, Archie," said innocent Nell, how you *did* jump!"

Archie's nerves were strung to such a pitch that the irritation he had tried to keep down burst forth at this remark, and he blamed his poor little sister unmercifully.

He complained that she watched him and cross-questioned him in a way that was becoming unbearable. Yesterday she was like a lawyer examining a witness, to-day she was like a detective.

Poor Nell, surprised at this sudden attack, and overcome by his unkindness, fairly burst into tears.

Archie, remorseful, though still angry, was

going to make an attempt to console her, when the sound of Mrs. Brown's voice on the stairs in conversation again roused his alarm, and he started and listened eagerly.

"*Do* be quiet, Nell," he said roughly.

The sound of poor Nell's crying prevented his hearing what was going on on the stairs, and he was in an agony that it was Mrs. Brown bringing a message from Miss Lorrimer, accompanied, perhaps, by the fatal book.

Now it struck Nell as so cruel of him to tell her in that rough way to "be quiet" when she was so unhappy, that she could bear it no longer, and she made a sudden rush to the door with the intention of going to her own room to give way to her grief in private.

But here Archie's conduct became more extraordinary still.

He also rushed to the door, and, putting his back to it, told her to remain where she was.

His own intention had been to run down and intercept the message before Nell or Tucker could hear anything about it, and he was exasperated at the idea of being foiled.

But it was too late now. Nell sank on the floor in a paroxysm of grief, and at the same moment someone tried to open the door. Archie flung it

open, feeling all was lost, and confronted—not the landlady, as he expected, but Tucker with a dull-looking parcel in her hand.

“They’ve mended the boots——” she was beginning, when she stopped short.

“Why, what in the world is the matter?” she exclaimed, looking aghast from one child to the other.

It was not much wonder. Archie’s whole appearance denoted that something unusual was occurring.

His eyes were flashing, his attitude was threatening.

Nell, all in a heap on the floor, was sobbing violently.

It was not difficult for Tucker to gather that Archie had been bullying his sister again, and she jumped to this conclusion at once.

She became very indignant, and did what she very seldom did now that the children were older.

She took the law into her own hands, and told Archie that if he could not behave more kindly to his sister, he should not remain with her, and that he was to go to his own room at once, and remain there till he was in a better temper.

Archie was too glad to escape, and he went into his own room, and leaned out of the window to get

cool. His cheeks were crimson, but he had not taken a look into the garden when they became more crimson still.

What was that on the seat under the tree?

A book!

What was that white thing sticking out of the book?

A piece of paper. A note! Yes! it must be! And that was his own French poetry-book, and this was little Miss Lorrimer's way of returning it. At all risks he must go and get it.

Down he went, six steps at a time, and was soon rushing into the garden in the wildest state of excitement.

Yes, yes! it *was* a note! or rather a bit of paper with something written upon it.

He snatched it and the book up, and hurried back to his room with beating heart.

Spreading out the paper on the bed, he eagerly spelt over its contents. It ran thus:

"We have got each other's poetry-books by mistake. Please put mine on the seat and leave it. Do not bring it to me yourself.

"PHYLLIS LORRIMER."

Not a word, not a hint as to whether she knew of his ungentleman-like behaviour or not.

What a strange, reserved little girl!

Altogether he was hurt. He did not like being told not to bring it himself.

He felt this to be a dreadful snub. She evidently did not want to know him; and he *did* want to know her so much.

A sound in the garden below interrupted him.

He looked out and saw the object of his meditations advancing to the seat, evidently searching for the poetry-book she had asked him to put there in exchange.

"I'll bring it in a minute!" he called out eagerly.

The little girl started, looked up at the window, and said:

"Oh no! don't! you mustn't," and immediately disappeared into the house.

Deeply mortified at this determined avoidance, Archie felt inclined to say she shouldn't have her book at all unless she let him bring it. *That*, at any rate, would have been the way he would have treated Nell.

But with this very dignified little stranger he felt it was quite different.

So he humbly got her French poetry-book out of its hiding-place in the portmanteau under the bed, and went down with it into the garden. He put it on the seat, and then went upstairs again.

Hiding behind the curtain, he waited to see what would happen.

I cannot describe his mortification and wounded feelings when he saw the stately Mrs. Jorrocks come out and fetch the book.

Little Miss Lorrimer was evidently so dreadfully afraid of making his acquaintance that she would not come. And not only so; but she would not trust his honour as a gentleman not to come after she had asked him not. It was *too* evident that she did not think him capable of acting like one. It was also too evident that she *had* been awake and aware of his ungentleman-like behaviour.

And so she judged of his character accordingly.

He felt very crest-fallen, and so humble that he made up his mind to go and make it up with Nell. *She* never treated him like this; and Miss Lorrimer was a nasty, proud, unforgiving little thing.

She must have told that horrid Jorrocks, too, all about it. It was too bad, too mean, too spiteful.

Still, on the whole, his mind was relieved. The books were once more in the hands of their rightful owners, and there was no danger of notes and message now.

He went back to the sitting-room, and, advanc-

ing to his sister, said, "I'm sorry I was so cross, Nell; and I've brought you the French poetry-book. There really was a reason why I could not give it to you yesterday."

Nell, far too happy at this reconciliation to ask any questions, and overcome with admiration at Archie's goodness in making an apology, thanked him warmly for the book, and shyly promised not to ask him any more questions.

"Oh, but you may now," said Archie; "there was a reason why I could not stand it yesterday."

Nell felt very mystified as to these reasons, but prudently held her tongue, and set to work at her French poetry.

Archie offered to hear her say it when she was ready to do so, and to say his to her; and so they passed a pleasant and profitable half-hour.

When Tucker put in her head to tell Nelly it was time for her to go down and bathe, she was charmed to see them on such friendly terms, and inwardly congratulated herself on having had the courage to pull him up.

"There is nothing like keeping a tight hand over a boy of that age," she said to herself, "and I shall be very strict with him in future!"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MYSTERY OF THE BLUE VEIL.

THINGS went on more quietly during the week that followed. Archie was still depressed and uncertain in his temper; but there were no more scenes.

Their mother sent them a very amusing book, at the end of which were a lot of new games, puzzles, acrostics, &c., and this gave them something to talk about. There was a great deal in it, too, about shells and sea-weed; and they began to make a collection, and to take long expeditions to rocks and other places in the neighbourhood where such things were most likely to be found.

When at home, they dried them, and arranged them, and docketed them. All this gave a fresh turn to their thoughts, and Nelly found it a great relief to have so many things to do and to talk over with Archie, without perpetually having to say to herself, "I mustn't talk about that, I mustn't allude to this." She grew happier, and began to forget all about their little neighbour.

But Archie did not. He could not help brood-

ing, and this made him, as I said before, silent and depressed, even morose at times.

He could not help feeling that both little Miss Lorrimer and Mrs. Jorrocks despised him for his conduct, and this made him uncomfortable. He hated meeting them out walking, and he always turned his head the other way when they passed, he felt so ashamed.

One thing annoyed him extremely, and that was that the little girl now hardly ever had her blue veil down, unless the sun was very bright; so that if he had only waited, he would have discovered that there was no mystery, and saved himself all this shame and discomfort.

He was quite sure now that she had seen him on that unfortunate day, and had realised what he was doing.

For, once meeting her unavoidably at the church door, she had looked at him as he thought with a peculiar expression; and he got hot all over, and turned his eyes away.

Tucker was very puzzled about Archie. She had never known him like this before. Sometimes she thought he must be ill, and Nell agreed with her that he was heavy and stupid and unlike himself. Archie owned one evening that he had an uncomfortable feeling in his throat; but on Tucker's

looking down it, with a spoon in one hand and a lighted match in the other, there was nothing to be seen, and all decided it must be fancy.

However, Tucker and Nell began heartily to wish that the time at Sandbank were over, and congratulated each other when the day came on which they could say, "The day after to-morrow we start for London, and the same night for Scotland."

Tucker had now quite come to the conclusion that Sandbank was not agreeing with Archie, and she was longing to get him to his native air, which she knew would soon put him all right again.

That evening Archie complained of his throat again. The match and spoon were again applied, but with the same result.

All the same, Tucker made up her mind that if he were not better next day she should send for the doctor.

Early next morning she was standing by his bedside asking him how he felt. Archie answered he felt very uncomfortable. He had got a stiff neck, and his throat was worse; but on Tucker saying she should send for the doctor, he was much offended and said it was great nonsense.

He had often, he said, had a stiff neck before, and if she would only get some of the same stuff

his mother used to rub it with and tie up his neck with flannel he should be all right in a little while.

Tucker had, however, now taken alarm, and insisted not only on sending for the doctor, but on Archie's remaining in bed till he came. She was afraid he had got a regular chill, and in view of the long journey before him she felt anxious.

Archie grumbled and growled, but Tucker was firm.

The doctor soon arrived, examined his throat inside and out, and asked several questions.

He then retired to the window with Tucker and asked several more.

Archie was not much interested, and was not listening to what they were saying, when suddenly his attention was arrested by hearing the doctor say, "Has he had any dealings with your next-door neighbour, Miss Lorrimer?"

Archie grew crimson, and buried his head under the sheets.

"Too bad," he muttered to himself; "even a strange doctor interfering and asking questions about it. What business is it of *his*, I should like to know? and how in the world could he have heard anything about it? *She* must have told him all about it herself, for no one else could. How

mean of her! What a spiteful revengeful little sneak she must be!

A sudden wish to hear what more the doctor was saying seized Archie, and he emerged from under the bed-clothes.

His face, as he listened, was a study. His eyes grew round, his face got crimson, and an expression of dismay stole over his whole countenance. Finally, the corners of his mouth began to twitch in a curious manner, and there was again a hasty disappearance of his head under the bed-clothes.

The sentence which fell from the doctor's lips while Archie was listening, and which caused all these various changes in his face was the following:—

“Miss Lorrimer came here to recover from the mumps!”

CHAPTER IX.

POOR PAUL PRY!

ALL unconscious of the effect being produced upon the occupant of the bed, the doctor and Tucker continued their conversation.

"If he *had* had any communication with her, I should have said, from the state of the glands, he was sickening for the same thing. But of course, as you say, there has positively been none——"

Tucker interrupted the doctor to say "none whatever." Mrs. Forbes's orders had been most strict that the children were to make friends with no one, and she could assure the doctor those orders had been strictly carried out.

"In that case," said the doctor, "it is merely, I should say, a slight chill, with glands down and swollen tonsils. I daresay we can cook him up for the journey. Keep him indoors, and I'll look in again in the course of the day."

The doctor then took his leave, promising to send a little mixture in a few hours, and Tucker followed him into the sitting-room.

For some time after their departure there was

complete silence in the room, and the something which lay under the sheets was very, very still.

Poor Paul Pry!

So *this* was the meaning of it all.

This was the real explanation.

This was the "mystery of the blue veil!"

The little girl had been recovering from the mumps, and wanted to hide her lumpy cheeks and throat. Oh, he saw it all plainly now! And he saw only too plainly, also, that he had caught the mumps from her on that fatal day!

He felt no doubt about it. He was in for them. He was going to have them. He had got them now. "Communication with Miss Lorrimer?" Of course he had!

With painful distinctness he remembered how he had bent over her, how her breath had fanned his cheek. He knew, oh, he knew too well, he *must* have caught anything there was to catch! "Oh, it's no use, it's no use!" he exclaimed aloud, "I know I've got them. They're not regularly out yet" (he spoke as if the mumps were a blossoming flower), "but they're coming, oh, they're coming, I feel them coming every minute!"

And he hid his face and cried as he thought of all the ruin it would entail. No Scotland! No pleasant start for London to-morrow! No meeting his

mother and father! Nothing! They would all start without him, and he would be left behind. Were not his father's last words that he would "wait for no one, and that anyone not ready to come would be left behind."

"Anyone with disorders of any kind," those had been his very words.

Oh, what an idiot he had been! Running his head right into a disorder, taking such pains to catch the mumps! All his own doing! All his own silly curiosity. All because he had been so determined to find out why a stupid little girl always wore an idiotic blue veil!

He sat up in bed and dried his eyes, ashamed of his tears and weakness. It seemed quite a long time now since he had known he had got the mumps, and yet it was only about ten minutes. His thoughts had travelled so quickly.

In that short time his hopes of joining in that joyful start to the Highlands had been entirely dissipated. The time to which he had been so eagerly looking forward had at last arrived; but he was to get nothing from it.

He was to be left behind, and with the mumps!

"The mumps, too," he muttered, "such a ridiculous name;" it seemed to take all poetry and romance out of his pitiful condition.

"I declare," he exclaimed, "I'd rather it had been a fever! It sounds so much better."

He had got so far ahead in his thoughts now that it required an effort to remember that no one but himself, not even Nell and Tucker, knew as yet that he had got the mumps.

How odd that seemed! They were still thinking that he was going to start with them to-morrow.

Why, even the doctor did not know yet. He was going to send him a mixture for a chill and a stiff neck!

The thought almost made him laugh. Stupid old doctor! How curious that his patient should know better than him!

And that even his mother should not know that he was "lying in bed with the mumps," seemed stranger still.

With a start he thought of Nell! She, at any rate, had not been exposed to any infection, and might be saved from it if she were sent off at once. But she ought to go at once—that very day.

He must, yes, he must call Tucker, and speak to her about it. And yet he was afraid to call her, or ring the bell, for fear Nelly should come in.

And then how was Nell to go to London without Tucker?

Who was to take her?

Oh dear! what a muddle it all was! And oh! how horribly uncomfortable his throat was getting! So tender outside when he touched it, and so horribly uncomfortable inside whenever he swallowed!

He wished Tucker would come. What could she be about?

But at the thought of Tucker came over him with renewed shame the idea of having to confess to her *how* he had caught the mumps. There was something so ridiculous about it now.

Well, it must be done.

At this moment the door opened, and Nell's very cheerful voice was heard.

"Are you getting up, Archie? May I come in?"

With all his might Archie shouted, "Don't come in, Nell! Go away, go away! Go away directly."

Poor Nell's piteous "Oh, Archie! how unkind you are!" smote upon Archie, as the recollection rushed over him that they were going to be parted, and that he should not be able to kiss her and say good-bye. He eagerly shouted, "I'm not cross or unkind *really*, Nell, but there is a reason why I *can't* let you in. Send Tucker to me. I want her as quick as ever she can come."

Nell's gentle "I will, Archie," and the sound of

her receding footsteps, was the last he was to hear of his little sister for many a weary day; and as he thought of this, he bitterly repented all his late unkindness to her, and the disagreeable behaviour of the last fortnight.

Tucker's entrance caused him to hastily dash away his tears, and he steadied his voice to say, as she advanced to his bedside, "Tucker, I want to tell you something. I know I'm going to have the mumps, and I know exactly how I caught them."

He then proceeded, with his head turned away, and feeling more ashamed than he ever remembered feeling in his life before, to tell the whole story.

"It's no use scolding," he added with a great sob, when he came to the end, and the distracted Tucker was beginning to heap reproaches upon him, "I'm quite miserable enough."

And then he broke down fairly, and burst into tears.

Poor Tucker was indeed nearly distracted. Mingled thoughts of Mrs. Forbes's anxiety, of what was to be done about Nell, of the inconvenience, the alterations in the arrangements, chased each other through her head; and everything seemed confusion and difficulty.

Her poor brain was in a whirl, and the responsibility of it all completely weighed her down.

Archie had to come to her assistance. "Look here," he said, sitting up in bed, and wiping away his tears with the corner of the sheet, "the first thing is to think of Nell. We must send her up to London directly."

Tucker looked more distracted than ever. Who was to take her? Did he think she (Tucker) was going to leave him alone in bed while she travelled up to London? After all, Miss Nell could take no harm in the next room, and as *he* was ill, it seemed to her *he* was the first person to be thought of, and not Miss Nell at all. Was he hot? Was he thirsty? Did his head ache? If he had really got the mumps, the doctor ought to be prescribing for him; and nothing was being done. She must send for him back directly.

The doctor soon arrived, and Archie felt very grateful to Tucker for undertaking to tell him all about it in the sitting-room, so as to spare Archie the humiliation of going through the story again.

There was, however, a twinkle in the doctor's eye when he once more presented himself at Archie's bedside, under which poor Archie writhed; but he bore it bravely, and at once consulted the doctor as to the difficulties about his sister.

The doctor's advice was to telegraph to Mr. Forbes, that his son had got the mumps, and to ask him to send some one down to take Nelly away.

She would be quite safe from infection as long as she did not come into the room. It was a very slight attack, he said, and Archie was not going to be ill: certainly not ill enough for it to be necessary that either Mr. or Mrs. Forbes should come down. He would be better in bed for a day or two, on account of catching cold; but he would soon be able to go into the sitting-room.

"How soon?" said Archie eagerly. "Shall I be able to join the others in Scotland?"

Ah! that the doctor could not say. He would be in an infectious state for a fortnight or longer, even though well enough to go out. It depended entirely on the state of the glands. As long as they remained at all swollen, he would be liable to give the mumps to others.

The doctor undertook to telegraph to Mr. Forbes, and after giving Tucker divers directions about Archie, took his leave, promising to look in again in the course of the day.

In what seemed to Archie an incredibly short space of time, a telegram arrived for Tucker, saying that the housekeeper would come down to fetch

Nelly; and that she was to get ready to leave Sandbank by an afternoon train.

By this time, Archie's excitement about the arrangements had subsided, and he had time to think how very uncomfortable he was, and what unpleasant things the mumps were.

He was hot and heavy, and his jaws and throat ached. He of course was getting worse, and must be worse still before he was better.

He had had a restless night, and had been awake since very early in the morning. So it was not surprising that towards midday, Tucker being busy packing Nell's things, and he therefore quite alone, he got off into a sound sleep, and slept so soundly, that he never heard the stir and bustle of the housekeeper's arrival, nor the still greater stir and bustle of Nell's departure.

Poor Nell was very sorry. She had wanted to say a good many things to him through the door, and to hear him say good-bye. She was dreadfully distressed at the state of affairs, and hated going off "like a coward," as she expressed it, and leaving poor Archie ill, all by himself.

She would far rather, she said, stay behind and catch the mumps, than run away like this, and leave him all alone in his trouble.

It seemed so selfish, so cruel. She wanted to

tell him how sorry she was, and how she wished it was *her*, and not him, that had got to stay at Sandbank with the mumps, and that he was going off happily to the Highlands. She begged Tucker, however, to tell him all this, and she faithfully promised to do so.

When Archie woke, he had entirely forgotten where he was, and what had happened; and he could not imagine why Tucker was sitting in his bed-room, quietly working; nor why the house was so very quiet.

Gradually the truth came to him, and it was all he could do to be brave. He felt so very low, poor fellow.

It came over him, how, day after day he should be quite alone like this with Tucker; and that Scotland, which had all the week past been getting nearer and nearer, was now in the far uncertain distance.

Tucker perceiving he was awake, came and asked him if he would not like a little beef tea, and he then heard to his astonishment that the housekeeper had been and gone, and that she and Nell had got off by the three o'clock train.

He was relieved to hear she was gone, but he felt dreadfully low. The feeling of being "left behind" came upon him very strongly, and he was

glad Tucker should go and get the beef tea, because he was afraid he might not be able to force back those rising tears.

The beef tea came, and poor Archie began to realise, from the pain and difficulty he had in swallowing, what the mumps were.

He put it down, and begged Tucker to talk to him a little, as he felt very dull.

She proceeded to give him all Nell's tender messages, and a little scrawled note expressing her sorrow and sympathy.

"Poor Nell," said Archie, half to himself, "I wonder she cares so much. I've been a horrid cross companion for a long time. I *wish* I hadn't; I can't think now how I could."

"But, Tucker, you see it was this secret that weighed on my mind and made me so cross. You understand it now? You explained to Nell, I hope, and then she can tell it all to mother. I tried to tell her in a letter, but I couldn't manage it."

Tucker answered she had carefully explained it to Nell and to the housekeeper, and that she believed the doctor had also written.

"By the way," she added, "Mrs. Crump brought you a letter from your mother. I've got it put by for you."

This letter was a great consolation to Archie.

She was so sorry for him, and did not say one word about his ill-fated curiosity. A fortnight, she told him, would soon pass, and she fully expected, she said, at the end of that time to be sending the carriage to meet him at the Highland Station.

Archie now suggested to Tucker that, in view of the long evening before them, she should go out to buy some games that they could play together. Also he wanted some Kindergarten things to cut out, and a "Punch" or two and a "Graphic."

Tucker demurred about leaving him, and thought she might find some one to send instead.

But Archie was sure no one but Tucker would know exactly the Kindergarten things he liked best, and he was sure he should want nothing while she was away.

Tucker, rather reluctantly, gave in; but she first went downstairs and made an arrangement with Mrs. Brown to come to the door if Archie rang.

Having put the bell-rope conveniently to his hand, she put on her bonnet and sped forth on her errand.

... was so young the first time, and did not say one
word about his ill-fated country. A fortnight after
told him, would soon pass, and she fully expected
she said at the end of that time to be waiting for
courage to meet him at the Highland Station.
... now suggested to Thacker that, in the
of the long evening before them, she should go out
to buy some garments that they could put together
... wanted some kind of garments things to go
out, and a "furnish" for two and a "dinner"
... about leaving him, and thought
she might find some one to send a letter.
... was sure to be the first to be
... the kind of things he had best
and he was sure he would want nothing while she
was away.
Thacker, rather reluctantly gave in but the first
sent domestic and made an arrangement with
... to come to the door of Anne's room.
... put the bellows conveniently to his
hand, she put on her bonnet and gazed down on her
return.

PART II.

A SEASIDE FRIENDSHIP;

OR,

A LESSON OF MUTUAL TOLERANCE.

PART II.

A SEASIDE FRIENDSHIP

OR

A LESSON OF MUTUAL FORGIVENESS

CHAPTER I.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

ARCHIE lay very still after Tucker had gone, and deep dejection came down upon him.

He thought of Nelly speeding up to London on her way to join that joyful start to the Highlands, to which he had so long looked forward, and in which he had no part now.

And the thought brought home to him more forcibly by contrast his own forlorn fate and the dismal prospect before him.

To lie here for all one long day and perhaps longer, and then to drag out another long fortnight, while he waited to be free from infection!

And as he buried his face in the pillow to hide the tears he could no longer repress, he revenged himself on the innocent cause of his misfortunes, and wished he had never seen her, that she had never come to the place where he was, that she had never been born.

He cried his heart out, poor boy, as he thought

of his melancholy fate, and the sad outcome of his fatal curiosity.

Some time went by; his sobs gradually ceased. He just lay there quite quiet with his eyes shut, half dozing and very still.

Every sound in the room was audible: the ticking of the clock, the crackling of the fire which Tucker had lit.

How dull it all was!

His head ached, his throat ached, and his eyes smarted from crying.

He began vaguely wondering whether little Miss Lorrimer had heard of his misfortune, and what her feelings were upon the subject. Would she be sorry for him? or would she say "serve him right?"

He didn't *think* she would. She was a kind little girl, he was sure, from her face.

And though he had been very rude and ungentleman-like, she could hardly rejoice that he had been so heavily punished.

Of course *this* was why she had so hastily called out to him that he was not to come down and fetch the poetry-book from under the tree. She was afraid of giving him the mumps. And it was not, after all, because she would not trust his honour as a gentleman that she had sent out Jor-rocks to fetch it instead of coming back herself.

Well! there was some consolation in all this.

Her determined avoidance of him had not sprung from dislike or contempt; and she was not mean, and spiteful, and unforgiving after all. Oh dear! how still everything was! When *would* Tucker come back?

By-and-by he became aware that there was, in the stillness, a new sound in the room. He couldn't tell what it was, and was too drowsy to raise his head and see.

He could hardly say what the sound was like, but it seemed like a very soft timid knock. Then silence.

Presently it came again. This time it sounded like a very, *very* soft timid knock, and as if the hand that knocked were trembling a little.

But he was half asleep and did not take it in much. The sound ceased, and there was stillness again, except for the ticking of the clock and the crackling of the fire.

By-and-by another sound in the room—a sound as if the door were being pushed open very gently and as if some one came in.

It was Tucker, he supposed, who, thinking he was asleep, was coming in very softly.

A mistake after all, for the room was quite quiet again.

It was fancy, he concluded. But yet—yet—surely there *was* someone in the room! He could hear very soft breathing—breathing with a catch in it, as if the heart of the breather was beating very quickly.

The thought of the palpitating breather seemed to fit in with the trembling knock he had thought he heard some minutes before.

He was beginning to feel dreamily curious as to what it could be. It must be some one who had come into his room by mistake, and it dawned upon him that if this were so, he ought instantly to send them away or they would catch the mumps.

Keenly sensitive to the magnitude of such a misfortune, he roused himself sufficiently to call out without looking up, "Go away! go away!"

The uneven breathing seemed to stop, and there came a catch like a sob in the breath. Then a very soft voice said, in a very plaintive tone, "Oh, *don't* send me away! *please* don't!"

Curiosity now took possession of Archie and roused him from his sleepy state.

Who *could* it be?

But the bitter lesson his fatal curiosity had taught him checked the desire to see who his visitor was.

He had formed a resolution in his own mind *never* to care to know *anything* again.

And besides, the sense of a stranger in the room reminded him of his swollen and distorted countenance, which by this time, no doubt, was getting very apparent.

"Get away," he repeated, hiding his face and blushing scarlet under the sheets. "I *tell* you I've got the MUMPS, and you'll catch them if you don't look out."

He listened, expecting to hear a hasty flight—helter-skelter, pell-mell. He imagined his flying visitor tumbling over everything in the desire to escape from the room as soon as possible.

But to his surprise there was not a sound of any movement; and the same very soft voice said, "I am not the least afraid of the mumps."

The desire to see so brave a person made Archie forget alike his resolution and his personal appearance, and he sat up suddenly and faced his visitor.

There, standing in the middle of the room, half way between the door and the foot of the bed, with a timid, hesitating expression on her grave little face, was Miss Lorrimer!

If any of my readers could imagine how they would feel if they suddenly saw "Alice in Wonder-

land," or "Cinderella," or any other heroine of a story-book standing in the flesh before them, they will be able to understand how Archie felt when he realised that the heroine of all his imaginations was really there in front of him, and had evidently come to pay him a visit.

He forgot everything as he met her eye—forgot his anger against her, his shyness as regarded her, forgot even his own unsightly appearance, with his swollen and distorted glands.

"*You*," he muttered; "is that really *you*?"

All his old interest in her revived in full force, and he was too much overcome by her near neighbourhood to say a word more.

She was the first to speak.

"I'm so sorry about it," she said mournfully, "so dreadfully, dreadfully sorry!"

Archie was highly gratified.

"I thought so," he said triumphantly, but more to himself than to her. "I thought she was too kind to say 'Serve him right.' I was almost sure she would be sorry for me."

There could be no doubt about it. She was looking down upon him with a most mournful expression, and her eyes were misty with tears.

"It has made me so unhappy," she said, "ever since I heard of it and of your sad disappointment."

This friendly sympathy was most soothing, but Archie was distressed beyond measure at seeing her cry.

"Oh, it doesn't matter a bit," he said hastily; "please don't be unhappy about it. I don't know why you should care!"

"Oh! it was all my fault," she said; "it was me who gave you the mumps."

"No," said Archie, "it wasn't *your* fault; it was entirely my own."

And he gave her a meaning look.

But little Miss Lorrimer did not respond to the look, and did not seem to understand what he meant.

"I saw your poor little sister crying when she looked up at the house as she drove away," she said mournfully, "and I can hardly think of it without crying too!"

And her dark eyes filled again with tears.

"Oh, never mind!" said Archie eagerly; "it doesn't matter a bit. Please, *please* don't cry."

"It seems so dreadful to be the cause of it all," she said.

"But it wasn't your fault," repeated Archie.

"Oh yes, I think it was," she said. "I was what you call the innocent cause, but still I *was* the cause."

"Well, I can't see that at all," said Archie; "it seems to me it was entirely my own fault, my own stupid curiosity."

"Curiosity," she repeated, looking much mystified.

"Yes," said Archie; "I was so anxious to find out why you always wore that blue veil."

The child looked more puzzled than ever.

"What *do* you mean?" she said.

"I mean what I say," he answered, "that it was all my curiosity. What do *you* mean?"

"I mean," she answered, "that it was all my stupidity and forgetfulness."

"Stupidity and forgetfulness!" repeated Archie, more and more mystified.

They were evidently playing at cross-questions and stupid answers.

"You tell me what *you* mean," she said, "and then I will explain what I mean afterwards."

"Don't you *really* know?" said Archie.

"Not the least," said little Miss Lorrimer.

"Well! it is a long story," said Archie, "so you had better sit down while I tell it to you."

Little Phyllis brought a chair to the bedside, and listened with the deepest attention to Archie's account of his and Nell's interest and curiosity in her and her blue veil. She laughed in fits over all

the possibilities that were supposed to be hidden under it; and the interest grew quite absorbing when Archie embarked on the account of his sitting up in a tree. But the tale was evidently quite new to her.

"Then didn't you guess what I was doing?" asked Archie eagerly; "didn't you understand it all, and didn't you think me most rude and ungentleman-like?"

Little Phyllis looked innocently at him and shook her head. No, she had seen nothing, heard nothing, guessed nothing.

She fancied she did just remember waking up for a minute, but she had gone to sleep again directly, and had slept till Jorrocks had come out and woke her up.

Archie drew a long breath of surprise and relief.

"Then you and Jorrocks were not despising me all this time," he said, "and thinking me a rude, vulgar, ungentleman-like, horrible creature!"

"Oh no, no," said Phyllis, horrified.

"Then it was all my fancy all the time!" exclaimed Archie.

"Quite," answered the little girl.

"But—but," said Archie, "why did you look at me in that kind of way at the church door?"

"What kind of way?" said Phyllis.

"Oh, well, a kind of despising, contemptuous, looking-you-through-and-through kind of way," said Archie; "like a person who knows you have done something you are ashamed of, and who knows that you know that they know. Don't you know?"

"I don't quite understand," said Phyllis, timidly, who had tried in vain to follow the meaning of Archie's rapidly spoken sentence.

"Well, I can't very well make it clearer!" said Archie.

"At any rate," said Phyllis, "whatever you may mean, it was not so. I never knew even that so many meanings could be expressed in one look, but I hadn't one meaning in mine."

"Then why did you give me that peculiar look?" persisted Archie, "it's bothered me ever since, and made me dreadfully shy and uncomfortable."

"I'm so sorry," she said, "but I think it was only that I was interested in you and your sister, and liked to look at you both and fancy what you were like. But it was very rude, I daresay. I've often been told it was rude to stare, and now I see it must be, as it seems to have made you so uncomfortable."

"But," said Archie, "if you knew nothing of all this, how did you think you had given me the

mumps? And why did you say that it was through your ignorance and forgetfulness?"

"I thought," she replied, "that it was writing you that little note. I didn't know, or rather I forgot at the time, that paper carries infection; that is why I blamed myself so. Till you told me about your coming down from the tree, and all that, I thought it was all my doing."

"Oh, but it's only scarlet fever that's carried in paper," said Archie, "not mumps."

"Is it?" she said. "Well, I'm very glad, any way, that it was not my note that did the mischief."

"But now," she added, "*do* go on telling me all you made out about me. It does seem so funny to me to be able to make up so much that is amusing out of an uninteresting little girl recovering from the mumps."

"Oh, but I don't think you are at *all* uninteresting!" said Archie.

This was the first compliment Archie had ever perpetrated.

Nell would certainly have thought he was improving in his manners had she been there.

"Oh, yes, I am," she said earnestly, "I mean it would never occur to me to make up amusing histories like you and your sister, about a person I did not know. But then you see I have no one to make

them up with. It must be so pleasant," she said, wistfully, "to have a brother or sister to talk to, and have fun with."

"Have you none?" asked Archie.

"I never had," she said, shaking her head rather sadly, "I am an only child."

"Have you no father or moth——" Archie was beginning, but something in her face stopped him.

"I have a father," she answered hurriedly. "Don't ask me any more just now. Let's talk about something else."

"Didn't you make up any stories about us?" said Archie, sorry to see he had made her uncomfortable, and anxious to get the conversation back to safe topics.

"No," she said, "not stories exactly. I thought you both looked very nice, and you always seemed to find something pleasant to do. All your games looked amusing, and *I* was so dull."

"Were you wanting to know us?" said Archie, much gratified.

"*Longing*," she answered; "but then I knew quite well I couldn't, because of the mumps."

"Well, now you see," said Archie, triumphantly, "it is just the mumps that has been the means of our making acquaintance."

"Oh, but," she answered, with great frankness,

"it was your sister I particularly wanted to know. I always long after little girls of my own age. Boys are not quite the same, you see. I don't know much about them. I don't understand them. They are too *rough* for me."

Archie was quite surprised to find how much he was hurt by this innocent speech. He got red and uncomfortable, and murmured something unintelligible about, "Of course he knew Nell was much nicer than him," or words to that effect.

But they came out rather huskily.

"Rough, don't you see," she went on, with a sublime unconsciousness of the blows she was dealing; "climbing trees, turning head-over-heels, knocking one about, and all that. Well, of course, I don't care about that sort of thing."

Archie's smothered mortification here burst forth. "That's so like an only child," he said testily, "thinking a boy is a sort of wild beast, half monkey, half squirrel, who must always be climbing and tumbling about. I thought you said you never made up histories about people. I'm sure you've made one now."

Little Phyllis turned her soft dark eyes wonderingly upon him.

"Are you offended with me?" she said. "You must not be angry with me for being an only child,

for indeed I cannot help it. I know it *does* make me different to other children, but you know it is not my fault."

"Oh, I know," said Archie, ashamed of his momentary irritation; "it was only that I was—well, rather sorry, you know—to find you thought boys so horrid, rough, and rude, and all that. Because, don't you see, I can no more help being a boy than you can help being an only child, and I want you—I should like you—I want you to like me, you know."

"Well, I do," she said gravely; "I like what I know of you very much."

"And you won't find me very rough; lying here," he added, with a half laugh, "I couldn't climb anything here, even if I wanted to. And as to turning head-over-heels, I wouldn't if you asked me. The very thought of it makes my poor head swim."

"Ah, yes," she said, "you're ill, you know; so of course that makes all the difference. A sick boy is almost as good as——" She corrected herself out of deference to his feelings. "Almost as quiet, I mean, as a girl."

"And I suppose you think," said Archie wrathfully, "that directly I am up I shall become a monkey-mountebank, and then you'll drop my ac-

quaintance. Now, look here," he added, raising himself in bed, "I promise that when I am well enough to go out, I'll walk along the Esplanade as quietly, and be as prim and old-fashioned as you are yourself."

The words had hardly left his lips before he regretted them. "Oh, I didn't mean it, really!" he exclaimed.

Little Phyllis looked very crest-fallen, and gave a deep sigh.

"Oh yes," she said, "you're quite right. That's what everyone calls me. An old-fashioned child. How often I've heard people say that about me! But I hardly thought you'd have found it out so soon."

Archie couldn't think of anything to say; but he felt very sorry.

Little Phyllis looked very grave. Archie looked fixedly at her.

There was rather a sad look on her face when it was quite still, and he could not help fancying it was not what he had just said that distressed her, but that his words had set her thoughts on something which made her sad.

"Are you not happy?" he said abruptly.

The child's face grew sadder still, and a pink flush mounted to her temples.

"I am not very happy just now," she answered in a low voice.

"You couldn't tell me, I suppose," said Archie, "what makes you unhappy?"

She shook her head.

"I thought I might, perhaps, be able to help you," said Archie.

"No one can help me," she said in the same low tone; "but it's very kind of you to wish to. Some time, perhaps, I may tell you, when I know you better. But not now."

She grew very grave and quiet after this, and Archie lay watching her, and not feeling inclined to talk of other things.

"I think I must go now," she said, rising. "May I come again and see you to-morrow?"

"Oh *do, do*," said Archie eagerly; "I shall count the hours till you come again."

She looked pleased, and held out her hand.

"Good-bye," she said. "I am glad to hear you say that. I am always so afraid that I may talk differently to other children, and that they may not care to talk to me."

"I'm sure you only talk a great deal nicer than most children, *I* know," said Archie, "especially girls."

And little Phyllis departed, much pleased with the lame compliment.

CHAPTER II.

A DAWNING FRIENDSHIP.

"I've had a visitor," said Archie to Tucker, when she re-entered the room, laden with things for his entertainment.

"A visitor!" she repeated in surprise.

"Yes, a visitor who is not afraid of the mumps," said Archie, "because she's just had them herself. Little Miss Lorrimer. Wasn't it kind of her to come."

"Well! I'm glad you've had company while I was out," said Tucker, "for I was afraid you'd think I was very long. But I'd a great job to get all you wanted."

So saying, she produced her different purchases for Archie's inspection; and the rest of the evening was spent in playing at some of the games she had brought.

It now became a question of how matters were to be arranged for the night. There was no door of communication between Archie's room and Tucker's, and though he was not ill enough for her to sit up with him, or even to sleep in an armchair

in his room, she did not like breaking off all communication with him, in case he should want anything.

If only she had had a bell, she could have attached it by a long tape, which could have been passed under his door and along the passage, and under her door.

She thought perhaps Mrs. Brown might have one, and was going off to ask her, when Archie was seized with a bright idea. "Look here," he said, "I have a plan that will do just as well. You get, as you propose, a long bit of tape and let me have the end of it here close by me. Then you pass it along under the doors, and just before you get into bed you tie the other end to your toe. Then, if I pull, you'll feel it, and wake directly."

Archie was enchanted with his plan; but, oddly enough, Tucker didn't see it in the same light at all.

It was very strange, he thought; but Tucker *did* sometimes fail like this to enter into his ideas. She became a sort of wet blanket.

Archie thought it *such* a good plan.

But Tucker murmured something to herself about "knowing what his pulls were," and "not having any toes to spare," &c., and Archie thought it very unkind and selfish of her to give so much

thought to herself, when *he* was ill, and might want her.

She left him to his reflections, and returned in a few minutes triumphant with a hand-bell, lent by Mrs. Brown.

So with this arrangement he had to content himself.

The next morning he was better. His throat was not quite so uncomfortable, and he could swallow with greater ease.

The doctor was much pleased with his progress, and promised to let him get up the day after.

The prospect of another long day in bed was not so depressing as it might have been, for Archie was looking forward to another visit from little Miss Lorrimer.

It was really delightful to have made friends at last with the object of all his thoughts and surmises; and he was not altogether hopeless of there being some sort of mystery about her still. From the few words she had dropped yesterday, she had evidently got some "secret sorrow," and it was most interesting to think about, and amused him quite as much as a story-book.

He lay wondering what it was in her life that made her unhappy. One thing was clear: she was not, as he had imagined, an "orphan heiress." But

then this made it all the more extraordinary that her parents had not come with her to Sandbank, and that the rooms should have been taken in her name. Perhaps her mother was dead. Not very recently though, for she was not in mourning. Perhaps her mother was mad. Perhaps both her parents were! Perhaps——

He wondered how soon she would feel she knew him well enough to confide in him, and tell him what her "secret sorrow" was.

He began to get very impatient to hear that gentle tap; and he kept on fancying he heard it and turning his head sharply towards the door.

Once or twice he shouted out "Come in," which brought Tucker hurrying out of her room, to ask if anything was the matter, and infuriated Archie greatly, as it gave him a disappointment each time. And yet only this time yesterday he had been lying there wishing he had never seen little Phyllis Lorimer, that he had never come to the place where she was; wishing even that she had never been born.

"Here you are," he exclaimed joyfully, as a soft knock at his door, followed by its opening, announced the arrival of his visitor.

Phyllis advanced with a bright bunch of autumn roses in her hand. "I've brought you some flowers,"

she said. Then added shyly, "I don't know if you care about them, perhaps boys don't. But if you don't like them, you can give them to your maid, you know."

Archie eagerly disclaimed his intention of doing any such thing, and, clasping the roses, declared he had never smelt anything so sweet in all his whole life.

Nell would have been astonished had she been there. For often and often had Archie grumbled at her love of flowers, and thrown her gifts to him carelessly about.

Archie couldn't make enough of the roses. He called Tucker and had them put in water, and disposed on a little table where he could see them.

He also called loudly upon Tucker to admire them, which she did, adding, to his great annoyance, "Why, Master Archie, I never knew you make so much fuss about flowers before;" but he made such frightful faces at her to stop here, that she had the sense to desist.

Not for the world would he have hurt his little visitor's feelings. "You're getting well so quick," she said; "you'll be able to go out again soon."

"Yes, in three days," said Archie.

"I shall have to lend you my blue veil," she said smiling.

Archie answered he should be very glad of it. "It would be horrible to be stared at with one's lumpy cheeks and throat," he said.

"That is just what I felt," she answered, "only I was much more of a figure than you are. I was a dreadful object."

"I'm not a beauty, I'm sure," laughed Archie. "Do you know how my father began his letter to me this morning? 'My dear Mummy;' isn't it insulting?"

"Tell me about your papa," said Phyllis, "and about your home; I like hearing about other people's homes and histories."

Thus admonished, Archie launched off into an account of Castle Forbes and all its delights, the fishing and the boating on the loch, the rides, the walks, and all the hundred and one things he and Nell did together.

Then he went on to his invalid mother, and all his occupations and pursuits with her. But he did not mention his friend.

Little Phyllis listened to it all with the deepest interest.

"*What* a happy life you must lead!" she said: "and what a change it must be for you to be shut up in this little room, with no one for a companion but me!"

"I assure you," said Archie, trying to be supremely gallant, "I don't mind it in the the least; I like you, you see."

"But I'm afraid," said Phyllis, "that it's only because you're ill that you like me. You see you're obliged to lie quiet, and be still. But directly you're better, you'll want to be off and doing all sorts of wild things that I can't join in."

"I do *wish*," said Archie, "that I could get you out of that monkey-squirrel idea you have of a boy; and that you would believe a boy is a human being, and not an animal. We don't *always* want to be doing something wild. I know exactly what you think," he went on with growing irritation; "out of doors we are always trying to break our necks, and indoors we are always upsetting everything, smashing everything, and dirtying the chairs and carpets with our muddy boots."

As he spoke, he flung himself round in bed with such violence, that the medicine bottle on the table by his side rocked and tottered with the shock, and then fell over on the floor with a loud crash, breaking in two or three pieces, and scattering its contents, which ran in a murky stream all over the carpet.

Little Phyllis started violently, and sprang to her feet. But she controlled herself with an effort,

and, instead of saying anything, she fetched a towel, and, kneeling down on the floor, mopped up the stream before it had time to flow any further.

Archie watched her ruefully, feeling very much ashamed of himself.

"You'll never believe me again, Phyllis," he said, as she rose from her knees, and put the bits of broken glass on the table.

Phyllis smiled. "Oh yes, I shall," she said; "it was just an accident. Only it made me jump a little. I didn't expect it, you see."

"No one ever *expects* an accident," said Archie, "but it's very good of you to take it like that. Many children would have crowed over one, and said, 'There now!' or 'You see I was right,' or something insulting. Coming just on the top of what I was saying, it seemed just like an answer, or rather a contradiction. It is very generous of you not to crow over me."

Phyllis looked pleased, and then said, rather shyly, "Perhaps you won't be hard on me when I bother you by my primness and nervousness; if I try to bear your noisy ways. We will each try to bear with the other."

"But you don't bother me," cried Archie, "and you're not a bit prim."

"Wait till we go out of doors together," said

Phyllis, "the difference will show more then. I know I couldn't do what I used to see your sister doing; I shouldn't like to even, and then perhaps you'll get annoyed with me."

"I don't think it's the least likely," said Archie; "but, anyhow, it's all right for the present."

"And I assure you that I often like being quiet for hours together. Nell would tell you how we read, and played quiet games, and cut out and draw."

"Oh, can you draw?" she said. "Do show me some of your drawings!"

"I hardly know," said Archie, looking round the room, "what's become of them all; but if you don't mind going into the next room I think you'll find some in the table-drawer."

Phyllis went into the next room, and returned with the drawer in her arms. She put it down on the bed, and Archie singled out one or two. They were chiefly horses and hunting scenes. She admired them very much, and thought his horses had a wonderful life and spirit in them.

"Oh, I hope there are some more!" she said; "I'll look in the drawer again."

She took up another sheet which was lying in the drawer, with a book upon it; but instead of bringing it to Archie, she remained gazing at it,

with a most puzzled expression of countenance. She looked at it, then at Archie, then at it again; and finally brought it to the bedside, and put it into his hand.

It was the representation of a terrible female, with red nose, grey corkscrew curls, and "pinenez;" and under it was written in large letters, "Miss Lorrimer!"

"How in the world did it get there?" exclaimed Archie, "and who could have written that underneath it?"

"But what does it mean?" said Phyllis.

As well as he could for laughing, Archie explained to his eager listener about it; and Phyllis laughed till she cried, and the more he told her the more she laughed.

"What am I supposed to be doing?" she said.

This question led to Archie's telling her all about the "just-set" eggs and the "spotlessly clean" and all the other details of Jorrocks's letters.

Little Phyllis was rather horrified. "What a horrid child you must have thought me!" she said.

"Oh, we didn't know you were a mere child then!" he said, "we thought you were a rich old maiden lady, or a mad lady with a keeper. After we knew you were a child, we thought you were an

orphan heiress. But Phyllis, how could you let Jorrocks write all that in your name?"

"I knew nothing about it," she answered. "Papa wrote and told her to write to Mrs. Brown, and make all the arrangements. Of course I never saw the letter. Oh dear!" she said blushing, "*how* shy I should have been if I had known that Jorrocks had made all that fuss about my food and that you and your sister knew it!"

"I threw the picture away, I'm sure," said Archie, "and I can't think how it got back into the drawer."

"I am very glad it did," said Phyllis, "it's given us a good laugh."

"You like laughing, then," said Archie; "you're not so grave as you look."

"I don't often laugh like that," she said; "but it's very pleasant," and she laughed again.

"I want you to tell me one thing," said Archie: "you said last night you were not very happy *just now*. Does that mean your unhappiness is new?"

"Rather new," she answered; "but don't talk about it now, I want to forget if I can."

"You'll tell me some time, won't you?" said Archie.

"Yes," she answered.

"I've got a secret sorrow too," said Archie.

"You!" she exclaimed, looking at him with surprise—"You!"

Archie certainly did not look like a person with a secret sorrow.

"Why, with your happy home," she resumed, "and your father, and mother, and sister, I should not have thought you had a sorrow in the world."

"But I have though," said Archie, looking very sentimental, "and it is so sad, and so secret, that I never talk about it to anyone. But when you tell me yours, I'll tell you mine. Then we can sympathise with each other."

At this juncture, Tucker came in with a message from Mrs. Jorrocks to say that Miss Lorrimer must come out for her afternoon walk. Archie gave a loud groan, and would not believe she had been with him nearly two hours.

"I will come again to-morrow," said Phyllis, as she rose to go, "and I hope I shall find you up and dressed."

CHAPTER III.

SECRET SORROWS.

ARCHIE was a little annoyed with Phyllis for going off so suddenly. The conversation had reached a most interesting point, and he had a great deal more to say. He was getting nearer, too, he felt, to the subject he wanted to get her to talk upon. His natural curiosity was at work again, and he felt very anxious to know what her secret sorrow was, almost as anxious as he had been to know why she always wore a blue veil.

She was really dreadfully reserved, he said to himself. When he came to think about it she had told him *nothing* about herself, and he had told her so much.

It was he that talked and she that listened. All he knew about her was that she *had* a father and that she was an only child. That was positively all.

And he had told her everything about his home, his pursuits, his mother; everything, in short, except his secret sorrow. But even that, he felt, he *would* tell her if she liked.

This must not go on. He was resolved. He

was determined. A resolution was formed. He would talk no more. Absolute silence should now set in. If he had not been such a chatter-box she would have had more time to tell him about herself, her home, her father, and her pursuits.

She was a funny little girl, he thought. He was not quite sure she didn't rather irritate him, though he was so fond of her.

Though she was so quiet she was rather decided. She did not consult him at all. Now with Nell it was so different. Nell had more respect for him; thought more of his opinion. He always settled how things were to be, and Nell always thought his view of a thing right.

But this child acted on her own responsibility. Had Nell been with him when he upset the bottle she would have said: "Oh, Archie, what had we better do? Shall I get a towel, or shall I use the sponge, or shall I call Tucker?"

Then, afterwards, she would have asked him if he thought she had rubbed the place enough, and whether she should leave the bits of glass there or pick them up, &c., &c.

But Phyllis asked him nothing; did not consult him at all.

Then again, just now, when Jorrocks's message had come, she had risen and left him at once,

though he had groaned and made objections. He had been on the point of suggesting she should take her walk later, or even give it up altogether, but before he had time she was gone.

She was very good, he felt sure, somehow. How generous she had been not to crow over him when he upset the medicine bottle!

He felt quite sure that in her place he would have loudly called out, "I told you so!" "There now," and every sort of insulting thing.

He lay thinking about her for a long time. It really was very interesting.

He was still so full of her generous behaviour that when Tucker came in with his tea he began telling her the story. But this was a great failure; Tucker took quite the wrong point. She seemed quite indifferent to the trait in Phyllis's character which had been developed by the accident; her whole interest was in the accident itself. She interrupted the flow of Archie's anecdote by loud lamentations over the spilt medicine, and speculations how she could quickest get another bottle made up. In about an hour he was to take it again, and what *was* to be done?

She finally went downstairs to consult with the landlady, and Archie, rather dashed by her want of sympathy, set to work at his tea.

The next morning the doctor gave him leave to get up and dress and go into the sitting-room.

Tucker put a very comfortable arm-chair for him out of the draught, and there she established him in the supremest comfort.

As soon as he was ready he asked her to go and invite his little friend.

Tucker replied she was gone down to bathe, and she did not think she would be back till nearly one. Sandbank was so full now that she was often kept waiting for a machine.

Archie controlled his impatience as best he could, and in a very little while was rewarded, for Phyllis's head was put in at the sitting-room door, asking if she should come in for half an hour before her dinner.

"Then, this afternoon," she said, advancing into the room, in reply to Archie's eager invitation, "I can spend entirely with you, for it is such a hot day that Jorrocks thinks I had better not go out till after tea."

Archie was delighted to hear it, but begged that she would have tea with him.

"You've not had a meal with me yet," he said, "and I'll give you 'just-set eggs' and stale bread, and all the things you like best."

Phyllis was much amused at these allusions. "I

don't want all that care now," she said, "it was only because of the mumps. The tables are turned now, and it is you that must have all these delicacies."

"I wonder Nell and I never guessed you were an invalid," said Archie; "it was rather stupid of us, I must say."

Phyllis took off her hat, shook back all her long wet hair, and came and sat down. "Well," she said, "and what are you going to tell me to-day?"

"Oh no," said Archie, "it's you that are to talk to-day. I want to hear *your* history, I've told you enough of mine."

"I'm afraid you'd think my history a very dull one," she said; "there's nothing in it that would interest you, but I'll try if you like. There's very little to say. I've lived all my life at Lorrimer Hall in Suffolk, quite alone with papa and my governess—a good deal without papa, for he's in Parliament and has to be often in London, and he never takes me there."

"Do you mind telling me," said Archie, "but don't if you'd rather not, if you have a mother?"

"No," she said mournfully, "she died long ago."

"Can you remember her?" was his next question.

"Not a bit," she answered. "Isn't it a pity? I wish I could. She died just as I began to run

alone. Here is her picture though. You can look at it."

She took off her locket as she spoke, opened it, and handed it to Archie.

It was a miniature of a very pretty laughing face; but it was not the least like Phyllis.

"She's not like you," said Archie, rather disappointed.

"Oh no," said Phyllis; "I'm not a bit like her in any way, Jorrocks says. She says mamma was full of fun and spirits. Papa is very grave and silent; but Jorrocks says mamma was so gay and happy that she made him gay and happy too. I can't fancy it; for I've never seen him anything but grave. Jorrocks says I take after him, and that I'm not like mamma in any way. But then you see," she added apologetically, "mamma wasn't an only child, she had quantities of brothers and sisters. They are all gay and full of spirits, and they don't understand what it is to be an old-fashioned only child. All my aunts and uncles say 'What a little old-fashioned thing you are!' And once I heard one aunt say to another, 'Does it seem possible she can be dear Phyllis's child?' They didn't know I heard; but it made me sad," she said, with a shake in her voice, "to hear them say it, for I felt they despised me, and did not think me worthy of my

mother. I try hard not to be prim and old-fashioned; but it *is* difficult when you are all alone. There are no children about where I live, and it's only at Christmas-time, when I'm with all my cousins, that I see any. And I know I'm different, and they don't care much for me to play with them, and it makes me shy. I feel much more at home with grown-up people."

"Phyllis," said Archie suddenly, "I want to tell you something. You're rather mistaken about only children. All only children are not what you seem to think they must be."

He paused a minute, and then looking away and blushing, he said:

"I have a dear friend up in Scotland who is an only child. There never could be anything less prim and old-fashioned than she is. She's in some ways more like a boy than a lady, for she can row and swim, and do all those sort of things. She can do everything a boy can do, and yet everything a lady can do too, for she is very clever. She can draw and do art-work, and she sings in a way that makes a funny lump come into your throat; and she plays the organ in church. She flies a kite better than I do, and, as to skating, it's lovely to see her. She's got her own boat on the loch, and mother's never been afraid to let us go boating with

her, because she's such a good swimmer, that if the boat were to upset, she'd jump in after us directly.

"Of course *now* I can swim myself, and so can Nell a little. But once, before I could swim, an accident happened, and but for her I should have been drowned. I was only six, and I was alone with her in the boat. I was naughty and would jump about, and do what she told me not. And so, at last, I toppled over and fell into the water. She jumped in after me directly, and mamma always says she saved my life; but she caught a most dreadful cold herself from sitting in the boat with her wet clothes, rowing to the shore, and she was ill a long time.

"I used to be so unhappy. I always thought she was going to die, and that I had killed her through my disobedience; but she got quite well again."

Phyllis was deeply interested in this account.

"And so you see," said Archie, "only children needn't always be prim as you seem to think."

He had got suddenly absent, and was gazing out of window, looking very melancholy.

"Phyllis," he said solemnly, "this is my secret sorrow!"

"Oh why?" said Phyllis.

"Because," answered Archie, "it's all over now.

All that happiness is past and gone. I've lost my dear friend, and I shall never be quite happy at Castle Forbes any more."

"Is she dead?" asked little Phyllis in a whisper.

"No," said Archie, "*worse*. She's married. Of her own accord, she's gone away and left us. Don't talk about it, Phyllis. I want to forget it——"

"What shall we talk about?" said Phyllis.

"Won't you tell me now why you are unhappy, and what your secret sorrow is? I've told you everything, and you've told me hardly anything in return. It isn't fair, you know, quite."

"Isn't it?" she said, looking earnestly at him. "But you see I'm not sure if I ought. You see it's not about myself. It's something—something about my father, and I don't know if it's quite right for me to talk about what he does. It's something he's done—something I don't like—that I can't *bear*—but I don't suppose it's right, is it, to find fault with what one's father does?"

"Well no," said Archie, "but you needn't find fault, you know, when you tell me. You could just tell me what it is. Oh do, Phyllis! I want to know so much. Does it concern you or him?"

"It is more his concern than mine," she answered, "but of course it concerns me very much in a way."

She paused a minute, and then said hurriedly, with her head turned away, "He is going to be—he has just, I mean, married again."

Archie's eyes opened very wide, and he looked condolingly at her. He wisely held his tongue, for visions of cruel step-mothers and neglected, ill-treated step-children, were dancing through his imaginative brain. He was very glad he had done so, when, after a minute's silence she went on: "I can't speak of it to Jorrocks. She's so violent about it. She is so angry. She says wrong things about papa, and of course I couldn't listen to that. She tries to make me dislike my—my step-mother before she comes, and that is not right, I'm sure. She makes up silly stories like you read in books about wicked step-mothers, and says I shall be turned out of my rights. I don't quite know what she means by that, but I feel pretty sure it is not anything I should care about much. But I have been obliged to give up ever talking to her about it, and if she begins I don't answer. So I have no one to speak to about it, and that makes me think the more, I suppose; for I hardly thought of anything else when I first came here. But since I have known you, I have thought much less about it, and so I have felt happier."

"Didn't you ever talk to your father himself

about it?" asked Archie—"didn't he announce it to you himself?"

"Ah! that's just the saddest part of it," she said. "I've never seen my father since it was settled. It was all the mumps. He was coming down to tell me, when I first got them, and that prevented his coming. He's never had them, and it would have been so awkward if he had caught them, because his marriage would have had to have been put off."

Archie was beginning to see that the mumps had been a worse enemy to poor little Phyllis than they had been to him.

"If I could have had a talk with papa," resumed Phyllis, "it would all have been different. I'm sure he would have been able to make me see the bright side of it. And he would have made me tell him all my reasons for not liking it, one by one, and then explained them away. He has written to me, and I to him, but that is not the least the same thing as talking a thing over together."

"Don't you know one can't *write* what one thinks? It's quite different to talking."

"Quite," said Archie heartily; "I know so well. Because I tried to write mother all about you and that story, and I couldn't do it a bit. I tore the letter up. The words wouldn't come, and what with the spelling, and ruling the lines straight, and alto-

gether, it's impossible to talk out a thing in a letter—at least now. I suppose some day it will be different, when expressing oneself comes easier and spelling too."

"Mother's letters to *me* now are just as if she was talking. I can quite fancy I hear her saying the things. Mine to *her*," he added laughing, "must, if she tried to fancy she heard me saying the things, sound like stammering and stuttering, or a child who can't speak plain."

"I wish *I* had a mother," said Phyllis, wistfully.

It was on Archie's lips to say "Well! you *have* got one now," but he checked himself in time, and turned it into "I wish you knew mine, Phyllis."

"I wish I did," sighed Phyllis, "but it's most unlikely I ever shall."

"And I wish even more," said he, "that you could know my friend, because she would be able to sympathise with you about being an only child, as she's never had a brother or sister in her life. But I'm afraid that's just as unlikely."

"All pleasant things are unlikely," sighed poor Phyllis.

"And all *unpleasant* things are not only likely but certain," added Archie—"my losing my friend, and you having a step-mother."

"Everything is very, very sad," said Phyllis.

"Yes," groaned Archie, "and the mumps on the top."

They were both getting into terribly low spirits.

Archie began to fancy his neck was getting worse, and everything seemed very dismal. He revenged himself on his unknown enemy, his friend's husband.

"I can't tell you, Phyllis," he said, "how I *hate*, how I loathe and detest that man!"

Phyllis looked rather shocked. "Oh, Archie, don't!" she exclaimed.

"I'd kill him if I could!" he went on, clenching his fist; "wouldn't you kill your step-mother if you could?"

But the gentle little Phyllis was not at all prepared to go these lengths, and was alarmed at Archie's violence.

"Please don't, Archie," she said; "it *can't* be right to talk like that."

She looked so really pained and troubled that Archie felt ashamed of himself. "Well, I didn't really mean it, Phyllis," he said, "and you are quite right. It *was* wrong of me to talk like that."

"And, after all," he said, "how much worse off you are than me! I have not got to have this—this—no, don't be frightened, Phyllis, I'm not going to say anything very bad, this horrid man in the house with me, and you've got to have this——"

"Oh stop," said Phyllis, laying her hand on his mouth, "*don't* say it. I won't let you."

She was afraid he was going to say "this horrid woman," and she felt she ought not to allow him.

Archie stopped directly. Phyllis was beginning to have some subtle influence over him, for which he could not account.

"Do you *always* do what you think right?" he said gently, "and do you always *not* do a thing when you think it wrong?"

"I am afraid not *quite* always," she answered, "but I always try."

"Miss Lorrimer," said Tucker's voice at the door, "Mrs. Jorrocks is calling you to your dinner."

This time Archie did not feel irritated at the prompt way in which Phyllis rose to obey the summons; nor did he try to detain her.

"I'm expecting you to stay to tea this afternoon, you know," he said, "and I'm going to prepare quite a feast for you."

"Oh yes," said Phyllis, "what fun it will be!"

As soon as she was gone, Archie consulted with Tucker as to the feast, and she entered heartily into the spirit of the thing, and promised to go out marketing directly after dinner.

CHAPTER IV.

A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE.

ARCHIE was not sorry when Tucker started on her errand.

He wanted a little time by himself to think over what Phyllis had told him.

He felt dreadfully sorry for her, and wondered she could even be as happy as she was.

How good she was; how resigned. She never said a word against anyone, and he was always abusing some one, and finding fault. How obedient she was. What a tender conscience she had.

He began comparing Phyllis with himself.

Well, after all, *he* was obedient enough. He always attended to what his father and mother told him; Tucker, perhaps, not quite always; but then she had not exactly got authority over him. And as to a tender conscience, well——

He sat quiet, for a disagreeable thought had come into his mind. It had come once or twice before, and he had driven it away.

But now it came back very forcibly. He looked perturbed, and frowned.

"I'm sure it is all right," he said at last, out loud; "I'm sure mother won't mind."

But, all the same, he fidgetted and sighed, and said "Bother!" once or twice.

As soon as Tucker arrived he burst out, without waiting to look at the parcels with which she was laden, "I say, Tucker!"

"Well, Master Archie," answered Tucker, "and what do you say?"

"I want to consult you about something."

Tucker was all attention.

"Don't you remember when we first came here you said mother's orders were we were to make friends with no one! Well! we've forgotten all about it, and here I've made friends with Miss Lorrimer!"

Tucker, who felt sure that Mrs. Forbes, when she gave her the order, was chiefly thinking of the risk of infection from children coming to the seaside to recover from divers complaints, saw no objection to his having done so.

Circumstances, she said, had altered, and she was sure Mrs. Forbes would not mind *now*.

Anyhow, she said, now that he was alone, his mother would be only too glad that he should have such a nice child to play with.

But even had Miss Nell been there, she was

sure little Phyllis was one whom Mrs. Forbes would highly have approved of as a companion for either of her children.

She would, if Archie liked, take the whole responsibility on herself, so certain did she feel that her mistress would not be displeased with her.

Archie was delighted with Tucker's view of the case. He silenced the whisper of his conscience, and made up his mind that he would abide by what she said.

He gave his whole attention to the muffins and other delicacies which she had brought home, and awaited with impatience the arrival of his guest.

The small tea-table was placed in the bay window, the Venetian blinds drawn down, and the cloth laid.

When Phyllis came in she was delighted. "Oh, how nice it looks!" she exclaimed.

"We'll have it at five," said Archie, "and till then we'll play games, draw, and talk."

They began with draughts, but Archie somehow didn't enjoy the game. They changed it to chess, but Archie couldn't play a bit.

Then they tried drawing, but his horses had no life or spirit in them.

"Why, Archie," said Phyllis at last, "what is the matter with you this afternoon?"

"It's no use," said Archie, throwing himself back in his chair, "I *must* tell you, though I don't want to. I can't enjoy anything, and I know I shan't till I tell you. Phyllis, I've got something on my conscience. It's been bothering me all day. It's a dreadful bore, but it's this. When we first came to Sandbank, mother's orders were that we were not to make friends with any other children. Well, we didn't—well—well—well, don't you see, I've forgotten all about it; and here, I've made friends with you. I'm sure mother would be glad for me to have a nice friend like you, but still, perhaps, I ought to have asked her leave first. I said something to Tucker about it, and she says she is sure mamma's chief reason was the fear of our catching something."

"Well," he went on, with a laugh, "the mischief's done. I can't catch anything from you now. But still I don't know if Tucker's right. Mother may have had other reasons. It is rather hard that this should suddenly come into my head, just as we are enjoying ourselves, and becoming such friends. It's quite prevented me enjoying you this afternoon, and I had been looking so forward to our tea together and all. It's spoilt everything," he finished up, glancing ruefully at the preparations for tea in the distance.

"What an extraordinary thing it is that one can hardly ever be happy in this world for two minutes together! Why don't you answer, Phyllis? Why don't you say something to make me feel more comfortable about it?"

"I will say something," answered Phyllis very gently, "but I'm not sure you will like it."

"Now, Phyllis!" exclaimed Archie, rather hotly, "you're *not* going to say you think I ought not to make friends with you!"

Phyllis looked very grave.

"You mustn't be angry," she said, "but it seems to me, it cannot be right to do what your mother told you not. But," she added, "write and ask her. I daresay she will change her mind now that you are ill, and have not got your sister."

"But, Phyllis," exclaimed Archie, "it's two days' post from here to Castle Forbes, and two days back again. It would be four days before we got the answer. I *couldn't* do without you for four days. I do assure you that, except about catching things, which does not matter now, I know it's more for Nell than for me that she's particular about who we make friends with. It's *quite* different for boys. I've often heard her and papa say that boys must take their *chance*, because they go to school and make what friends they like, and meet every sort

and kind of boy. I am sure she would never have minded me making friends with you, though she would not have liked Nell to."

Archie quite forgot how rude this sounded, till he saw the colour mount into the face of the sensitive Phyllis.

"Oh dear!" he exclaimed. "Have I said something you don't like?"

"Oh, it's nothing. Nothing," said Phyllis.

"But it *is* something, Phyllis; you've got quite scarlet all in a minute."

"It's only—only——" she answered, "that I didn't like to think your mother shouldn't think me a fit friend for your sister. It's very silly, I know, but I can't help it."

"Oh, I didn't mean that, *really*," said Archie, much distressed. "I meant—I hardly know what I meant. I'm so dreadfully clumsy, Phyllis, in what I say. You mustn't mind. Nell never minds a bit what I say to her. She's used to me, you know, and doesn't care. You'll get used to me soon, and then *you* won't mind either."

"There's not much chance of my getting used to you," said Phyllis, "if we are not to be friends any more."

She said this very gently, but very decidedly;

and Archie exclaimed in alarm, "What *do* you mean, Phyllis?"

"I mean," she said still very gently, but with an air of quiet decision, which contrasted strangely with the distressed expression of her large dark eyes—"I mean, as I said just now, that nothing can make it right for you to disobey your mother, and that, until you get her answer, saying you *may* make friends with me, I don't think I ought to come here any more."

"Phyllis!" exclaimed Archie, aghast.

He was more astonished than he could say. He had never intended her to decide the question at all. He was merely relieving his own mind by airing the subject; and he thought that his own arguments in favour of the view he wished to take were most convincing.

He thought he had entirely talked her over to his side, and he merely wanted to hear what she had to say to make him feel still more comfortable as to the decision he had arrived at.

And now to find that all his eloquence had been thrown away—to find that this gentle little girl should so entirely set aside all his arguments, and have so little respect for his opinion, as quietly to act on her own judgment!

He was accustomed to Nell's following of his

lead on all occasions; and in cases of conscience she always allowed him to decide, and rested with entire trust on his judgment. For he was an upright and conscientious boy, whatever his other faults might be; and Nell knew it, and trusted him implicitly.

Phyllis's conduct impressed him strangely. With all his astonishment, and with all his annoyance, his admiration for her increased. He felt deep down in his heart that she was right, and that her conduct was more "single-minded" than his.

She had looked straight at the question, without allowing herself to be biassed by turning her eyes either to the right or to the left; and so her judgment had not been swayed, like his own, by other considerations.

"Is it right?" or "Is it not right?" had been her mental questions: while *his* had been, "Is it pleasant? Is it necessary? Are there not several ways of looking at it? Is there not a way out of it?"

Archie fell into a deep train of thought, thinking how different goodness was in theory to what it was in practice, and how very difficult, and often how very disagreeable, it really was to do right, even in little things.

And yet it was in these little things, his mother had told him, that the battle was often fought, and

the victory won, in the warfare for ever going on in the world between the army of good and the army of evil.

One must range oneself on one side or the other, and she had often told him that every time you resolutely resolve to do right, and refuse to do wrong, you *are* ranging yourself on God's side in the great battle.

"The fight is going on now," he said to himself; "I am trying to make myself believe that what I *wish* is right, though all the time I know, for my conscience has been telling me all day long, that the really right thing is that which I do *not* wish. I will, yes, I *will* range myself on God's side in the battle, and He will help me to get the victory. It is very disagreeable, but, after all, if there was nothing disagreeable there would be no fight, and if there were no fight there would be no victory.

He was roused from his meditations by a very gentle "Good-bye, Archie. Write to your mother by this post, and let me know directly you get the answer."

And before he could say a word the door had closed very quietly, and Phyllis was gone.

CHAPTER V.

“MAN AND HORSE.” “IMMEDIATE.”

WHEN Tucker came in at four o'clock with the cups and plates, she remained rooted to the spot with astonishment at the sight which met her eyes.

Phyllis was not there, and Archie was lying back in his chair, doing nothing, with the traces of tears about his eyes.

A few questions soon extracted from him the cause of his dejection.

Tucker was much concerned. She first repeated everything she had said on the subject before dinner, and then offered to go herself to talk to Phyllis, and to assure her that Mrs. Forbes would not object.

But Archie would not hear of it. The battle was fought; the help had been given, the victory won; and he wondered now how he ever could have had two opinions on the subject.

It was so clear.

“Is it right,” or “Is it not right,” to disobey a decided order?

The whole question had resolved itself into

obedience to his mother's order, and he was firm as a rock now.

Even had he not come to this conclusion, he knew any appeal to Phyllis would be fruitless.

Her last words showed she meant to abide by his mother's decision and by that of no one else.

"No, Tucker," he said, "the only thing now is to write to mother."

"But what is to become of the *tea*?" exclaimed Tucker in despair, "and all those beautiful muffins and buns, that I've half killed myself going out in the heat to buy? There's Mrs. Brown got her kitchen fire lighted again on purpose to toast them, and there's a jug of cream and all!"

Archie gazed mournfully at the little table in the window, which was already showing signs of the expected feast.

"I'm sure I don't know," he said in a most melancholy voice. "I know you and I shan't have any heart to eat the things all by ourselves. Hide the preparations, Tucker, and take the table away. I can't bear to look at it."

Tucker looked very distressed, and tried to turn Archie's thoughts. "Shall you write to your mamma by this post?" she said.

"Yes," he said with a sigh, "but there's plenty

of time. The postman won't be here till a quarter to five. I must beg mother to answer as quick as possible, but anyhow it'll be four days before we hear."

"Ask her to telegraph the answer," suggested Tucker.

"Oh, what a good thought!" exclaimed Archie. "Yes, I'll ask her to telegraph. Then it will be only two days to wait instead of four. Tucker! you *are* clever. I feel quite in spirits again."

"I'm sure I'm glad to hear it," said Tucker, "for it's something dreadful to see you. Why your face is as long as my arm, and your voice——"

"Look here," interrupted Archie, "I've got a splendid idea. Why shouldn't *I* telegraph too? That'll make it only one day. Why, I do believe if I did I could almost get an answer to-night! May I make friends with Phyllis Lorrimer—answer by telegram. Eh? What do you think?"

Tucker, however, demurred a little. He must remember it would be very expensive. He seemed to have forgotten that Castle Forbes was nine miles from the post-office, and that the telegram would have to be forwarded by a special messenger.

But Archie did not think much of this argument. He was sure his father would not begrudge

the expense for anything so important as his happiness.

"And it *is* for my happiness, Tucker," he urged. "I assure you at this moment my whole happiness in life hangs upon the answer to that question! I'll tell you what, if papa does not like paying it, I'll pay it myself. I've got, as you know, three pounds in the Lochside Savings Bank, and there is nothing I am ever likely to want so much again as this—nothing I would sooner spend my money upon."

Now this three pounds of Archie's in the Lochside Savings Bank was quite a joke in the family; it had done so much and been spent so often; there was nothing, at different times, that it had not been expected to buy.

Had it been taken out of the bank each time and spent according to Archie's imagination, something like four times its value would already have been invested in different ways. Whenever there was any great wish in his mind for anything which there was a difficulty in procuring, the "three pounds in the Lochside Savings Bank" always came to the front.

And each time Archie made use of the same form of words as he had done just now: "There is nothing I am ever likely to want so much again."

Tucker agreed with him that it would be a very

good way of his repaying his father, in the event of Mr. Forbes not caring to incur the expense.

Archie had now quite settled to send the telegram. Tucker procured a form from Mrs. Brown, and she wrote it at Archie's dictation.

He decided that it should be no expense whatever to his parents, and that he would not only pay the messenger, but prepay the answer.

"From
ARCHIBALD FORBES,
Sandbank.

"To
Mrs. FORBES,
Castle Forbes, &c.

"May I make friends with Phyllis Lorrimer?
Telegraph reply. Answer prepaid.

"Forward immediately.

"Man and horse.

"Special.

"Immediate."

Archie took up the telegram and wondered whether he could introduce any more "immediates" or "specials" anywhere, to show what a hurry he was in and to ensure the telegram starting directly.

He begged Tucker to take it herself to the post-office at once and not to trust it to anyone else. She was to be sure to say when she got there that it was to start directly, and to take precedence of

any other telegram that was being sent from the post-office, as it was of the greatest importance.

The long-suffering Tucker gave a somewhat despairing glance at the sunny windows and thought of the heat of the road which led to the post-office, but she said nothing, and went into the next room to put on her things.

Archie could hardly restrain his impatience while this was going on. He kept calling out to her to make haste and not to waste time dressing herself up smart.

"Never mind putting on *boots*," he called out; "shoes will do quite well. Never mind your coat; it's hot enough; you'll find your gown quite enough. Oh, do be quick!"

Poor Tucker got so flurried by all these injunctions, that she was really far longer dressing than she would have otherwise been.

She had to tie her bonnet strings two or three times over, for her hands trembled so that she could not do it properly.

Then her button-hook flew out of her agitated hand, and the button of her boot with it.

It disappeared in that unaccountable way in which button-hooks do when such an accident happens; and she was hunting and groping about some time before she found it.

Then her coat perversely hooked itself on to her hair as she put it on; and then she put her arm into the lining of the sleeve instead of into the sleeve itself.

Finally, she lost her purse; though it was right in front of her, and it was some minutes before she discovered it; and, to crown all, hunted the room through for her parasol, and then found she had got it in her hand all the time.

The fact was, Archie flurried her so dreadfully, that she hardly knew what she was doing. At last, hot and agitated, she came into the room to get the telegram, and received orders from Archie to "run the whole way."

CHAPTER VI.

THE AFTERNOON POST.

ARCHIE breathed a sigh of relief when Tucker was really gone.

He lay back in his chair, following the telegram in his own mind.

He imagined it arriving at the little Highland post-office; the horse being hastily saddled, and the man galloping off to Castle Forbes.

He knew every bit of the road. It was a ride he often took.

He pictured to himself how the man would come to the steep hill that lay half-way between the house and the town, and how he would slacken speed, and let the horse take his own time for a bit.

Then, on gaining the top, just where that beautiful view of the hills bursts upon the sight, he would spur his horse on again, and gallop on flat ground for some time.

Finally, he imagined him reaching the gates of Castle Forbes. Old Madge would come out of the little lodge and open the gates for him. Then he

would speed along the avenue up to the house, jump from his horse, seize the iron bell-handle, and ring a merry peal.

Perhaps Nell, attracted by the sound (rather a rare one at Castle Forbes), would peep out of the school-room window to see what it meant.

The hall-door would open; the telegram be delivered into the footman's hand, and carried to his mother in her little boudoir.

But when he got as far as this, Archie became a little troubled and remorseful.

Perhaps she would be frightened. Perhaps he ought not to have sent her a telegram. Perhaps, delicate as she still was, it would upset her and make her ill. Oh dear! oh dear! he had quite forgotten how nervous she was about telegrams when either he, Nell or their father was away from home.

He wished he had not sent it.

She would perhaps think he was dying of the mumps.

Oh no! by the way, people *don't* die of the mumps.

Well! it was too late now to think of all this. And, at any rate, she would not be frightened long. She would soon see there was nothing the matter. One glance, and "May I make friends with Phyllis Lorrimer?" would set her fears at rest.

He imagined her reading it, and asking if the messenger were waiting; then getting off her sofa, and advancing to her pretty little writing-table to answer it. She would take up the pen he had given her at Christmas, and open the blotting-book that had his photograph outside it, and—and—— But here a very disagreeable thought crossed Archie's mind. Supposing she should say "No!"

He had never thought of this before.

Supposing one of those very good reasons that she always had when she refused him and Nell anything they wished for, existed, and she should telegraph "No!"

He turned cold when he thought of it.

He shouldn't be able to bear it, he knew he shouldn't! It would make him quite ill, he felt sure. It would perhaps bring on the mumps again; a relapse, he thought people called it. He had heard often that when people were recovering from an illness, a sudden shock, grief, or disappointment brought on a relapse, and they were as ill as ever again.

He felt sure this would be his case. For a refusal to this request would be a shock, a grief, and a disappointment, all three in one.

So only fancy what an effect it might have upon him, and *how* ill he might be.

He wished he could let his mother know what a terrible effect a refusal would be likely to have upon him. She would stretch a point, he felt sure, not to run any risks, even if she had some good reason for not saying "Yes" at once.

But what reason *could* she have? He began to regret having sent a telegram instead of a letter. For it was true his mother did not know anything about Phyllis, and in a letter he might have explained what a dear, good, kind little girl she was; and what an excellent companion she was for him in every way. He might have explained, too, how *very, very* anxious he was about it, and how dreadfully disappointed he would be if she said "No!"

He might even have hinted his fears of the danger of a relapse, should he not have what he wanted.

After all, the telegram expressed nothing, and his mother might say "No!" without the least idea what a disappointment she was causing him.

How silly he had been to send a telegram. How much better to have stuck to his first intention of writing her a letter and asking her to telegraph a reply.

It would have been far better to wait two days without knowing anything for certain, than to receive

an answer, that evening perhaps, which might crush his hopes for ever.

Archie sank into the deepest dejection, from which he was presently roused by the entrance of Tucker.

"I'm so sorry, Archie dear," she said; "and I'm afraid you'll be disappointed, but I've not been able to send the telegram. When I got——"

"Oh, hurrah! hurrah!" interrupted Archie clapping his hands, "Tucker! Tucker! you couldn't have brought me a more welcome piece of news."

Poor Tucker looked very puzzled. She had expected to be violently scolded; but being very full of her own part of the affair, and anxious to defend herself against his expected reproaches, she proceeded to explain that he had flurried and fussed her to that extent that she had forgotten to look into her purse before starting to see if she had money enough to pay the telegram. The consequence was, that when she had got to the post-office and had handed in her telegram she found she had only a few pence in her purse.

She had thus been subjected to great mortification; she had looked very foolish before the people at the post-office, more especially as she had been so grand with her "man and horse," "immediate," &c.

And then the postmaster had refused to trust her, even though she had assured him he should have the money that very afternoon. In vain had she mentioned Mr. and Mrs. Forbes of Castle Forbes; in vain had she added their address in London, and even given the name of the Scotch borough which Mr. Forbes represented in Parliament; nothing had softened the postmaster's hard heart.

There were, he said, so many people coming and going at the seaside that he could trust no one.

It had cut Tucker to the heart to be suspected like this, but she knew, she said bitterly, how it was. He, Archie, had hurried her so that she had gone off with her bonnet-strings tied on one side, and her coat only half buttoned; and what with fuss, and heat, and running, was in such a dishevelled state when she arrived at the office, that she did not present a respectable appearance, and so the man would not trust her.

However, it was all, she said, for Archie's sake, and she was prepared to sacrifice herself still further.

She had therefore come home as quickly as possible to fetch some money, and was willing to go back again at once, by which means there would

still be time to receive an answer to the telegram either this evening, or early to-morrow morning.

"Oh, but that's just what I don't want," exclaimed Archie; "I particularly don't want a hurried answer!"

He forgot that he had not yet explained to Tucker what had caused him to change his mind, so that it is not much wonder that she, poor thing, who had hurried backwards and forwards to the post-office in the heat of the day to please him, and been exposed to great humiliation besides, should be a little aggrieved.

"What a strange boy you are!" she exclaimed rather tartly; "there's no knowing from minute to minute what you want and what you don't want. You're as changeable as a weather-cock!"

Archie explained the reasons he had for having changed his mind with regard to the telegram, and he quite made her see his objections; though she much regretted that he must now, anyhow, be deprived of his little companion for at least two days.

"The postman will be here in three quarters of an hour," she said, "and if you're going to write by this post, the sooner you begin the better."

She fetched him an inkstand and a blotting-

book, and then went to her bedroom to cool herself after all her exertions.

Archie took up his pen and set to work at once. A letter was a great effort to him, and took him a long time. The postman would be here in half an hour, and he wanted to explain to his mother exactly how the case stood. So he made up his mind he mustn't "bother about the spelling," or else he should never have time to do his subject justice. The postman was like an express train behind him, and there was no time to be lost. And "bother about the spelling" he certainly did *not*.

Phyllis, I regret to say, was spelt with an "F" at the beginning and an "i" in the middle. Lorrimer had only one 'r' and two or three "m's."

Archie's spelling was of the kind called "phonetic," which means that every word was spelt exactly as it is pronounced.

He began with a glowing description of his little friend's character. She was so gentle, so good, so con—con——

He wanted to put conscientious, but he made a sad hash of the word. Still, it was necessary it should be spelt so that his mother should understand it, as it was a quality she prized very highly and one which would go a long way as a recommendation in a companion.

So he *must* try and get it right Conn——
cons——

Every bit of paper near Archie became in a few minutes covered with various ways of writing the word, not one of which, I must needs say, presented the slightest appearance of, or approach to, the right one.

He found the description of Phyllis's goodness a very laborious task. All the good qualities were so hard to spell.

Now, if she had been "greedy" or "selfish" he could have got on much better. Those kind of words were quite easy. But he wanted to explain how conscientious she was, how much decision of character mingled with amiability of disposition there was about her, and these were frightful words to undertake.

He had, in consequence, to cut the description very much shorter than he could have wished. She was, according to him, a "pooty" little girl, as well as being "kind, jentel, and conssheenshus."

For he had fixed at last on this way of spelling the quality out of the many he had tried.

He next branched off into the description of his own loneliness and dulness, shut up in the house with no companion of his own age.

He grew quite affected with his own recital of

his woes. He had hardly realised how pitiful his case was till he began to put it down on paper.

He had to lay his pen aside once or twice to wipe away the sympathetic tear which he felt gathering in his eye. "Lying hear all alone with the mumps," he had just put, when he remembered he was sitting up straight in a chair writing a letter.

Truth obliged him to scratch the sentence out, but he felt it was a great pity. Nothing else sounded half so pathetic.

He broke off short, feeling the express train behind him again, and ended his letter with entreaties, accompanied by huge notes of exclamation.

"*Do*, deer mother, do say yes!! *Pleese*, *pleese* do!!! If you say no, I shall be so diss—diss——"

But I will spare my readers his spelling of the word disappointed, though I can assure them that no amount of "s's," "t's," and "n's" that they could cram into the word would be in excess of the supply with which Archie provided it. On the other hand, there was remarkable economy in the matter of "p's."

It was a curious-looking word when finished, and he sat gazing at it for some time with a sense of there being something wrong about it.

I will draw a veil, too, over the "affectionate son" with which the letter concluded.

Archie was quite exhausted when he had signed his name, and begged Tucker to direct and stamp it for him, as his hand quite ached and his head also. Then, impressing upon her the necessity of having it ready the *moment* the postman came, and to put it into his hand herself so that there should be *no* mistake about it, he threw himself back into his chair and closed his eyes.

He was not sleepy, but he could not bear to see the preparations for the tea still there. They seemed to mock him—a sort of phantom feast; a reminder of hopes unfulfilled and of joys which had never come to pass.

How dull he was! He watched the clock, but the hands hardly seemed to move. Would it be like this for the whole two days that must elapse before he got his answer?

How was he ever to get through the time? What should he do with himself?

He groaned and sighed and grumbled; wondered what Phyllis was about, and if she was as dull as he was.

What a pity it was! She was losing her shyness, and they were just getting on so nicely together.

A loud ring at the bell.

"Tucker!" shrieked Archie, "there is the postman! Quick! quick!"

Tucker, whose head had been out of window for some minutes in her sympathetic eagerness to catch the first glimpse of the postman, and who had seen him coming long before Archie heard the ring, was half-way down the stairs when he called; but, alarmed at the awful sound which proceeded from the sitting-room, she came all the way up again in a fright to ask him what was the matter.

This infuriated Archie, as he feared that by this means she would *just* lose the postman.

The whole thing was absurd and unnecessary, as the postman always, when he delivered his letters, waited to see if there were any to be taken. So there was plenty of time and no need for all this excitement.

"It's all right," said Tucker, entering his room again five minutes after; "he's gone off, letter and all, and here's one for you come by this post; it will amuse you while I go down and see about your tea."

"Oh! I don't want any tea," said the gloomy Archie.

"Oh! Master Archie!" said Tucker, "do try and eat a little. Now, if Mrs. Brown were to toast you one of those muffins——"

"Tucker," said Archie solemnly, "it would choke me!"

"But, Master Archie," said Tucker, who had a frugal mind, "we can't waste a whole bag of muffins, and they won't keep till to-morrow."

"Well! give them," said Archie, "to—the poor!"

Tucker saw it was hopeless and went away. She felt very sorry for the boy. He looked so dull and dejected, lying back in his chair.

She was away about five minutes, but when she came back a most extraordinary transformation had taken place.

Archie was sitting bolt upright, with his letter in his hand and a beaming countenance.

He looked up when she entered with sparkling eyes, and exclaimed, "Oh, Tucker, do just listen to this! Oh, isn't this almost too good to be true!"

The sentence in his mother's letter which had brought about this marvellous change was the following:—

"When you feel up to it, you might ask your little next-door neighbour to tea with you. I find her father is an acquaintance of your papa's; they meet frequently at the House of Commons."

Tucker entered heartily into his joy and volunteered to go off at once to fetch little Miss Lorrimer, though she was dreadfully afraid she had gone out.

But Archie felt he could wait now. She was coming, coming with full leave and permission, and he could enjoy her society without any stings of conscience for all the remainder of his stay at Sandbank.

How glad he was now the tea-table had not been removed! How delightful it was to think it was still early enough for the feast to take place! How pretty it looked in the window with the three places laid! It was really quite a picture!

Tucker might almost begin making the tea and other preparations directly. She might go and ask Mrs. Brown to toast——

“Oh, I say!” he said out loud, and then stopped short rather ashamed of himself; for the feeling in his mind was one of dismay lest Tucker should have taken him at his word and given the muffins to the poor!

“How selfish one is after all!” he mused. “I have always heard that happiness makes one so, and now I see it is true. But still I rather hope she hasn’t given them *all*.”

In a very few minutes the door opened and Phyllis bounded in, her eyes shining and her cheeks flushed, looking as pleased and happy as Archie himself.

Tucker watched the joyful greeting that passed

between the two children, and, with a sigh of relief, went off to make the preparations for the long-delayed feast.

And I think the reader will not need to be told that she had *not* given the muffins to the poor of Sandbank.

CHAPTER VII.

MUTUAL TOLERANCE.

FROM that day Archie and Phyllis were inseparable companions, and it became a matter of course that she should have tea with him every afternoon.

And in a very few days Archie went out for his first walk.

Having had the mumps more slightly than Phyllis, he was much more presentable than she had been, and there was no occasion for the services of the blue veil. A silk handkerchief rather high up round the throat was enough to hide all imperfections from the passer-by.

He was a little shaky on his legs at first, but that soon wore off, and every day he was stronger and able to do more.

Phyllis watched his recovery with mingled feelings.

First and unselfishly, she was delighted to see him getting well and strong; but, at the same time, she had the old uneasy feeling that, once restored to his usual health and activity, he would cease to enjoy her society.

Archie, on the other hand, was most anxious to remove her impression that boys must necessarily be rude and rough.

When people do not suit each other, the only plan is for each to give in a little for the sake of the other. There must be a system of give and take.

And so Archie and Phyllis found. In this way they both acted and reacted upon one another to their mutual advantage. For Phyllis made stupendous efforts to overcome her natural nervousness and dread of noise and roughness; and Archie conducted himself in a quiet and rational manner in order to reassure her.

The consequence was, *she* became more child-like and *he* became more gentle and unselfish.

Nell would have been astonished to see Archie's chivalrous attentions towards his little companion, and the way he helped her over the slippery rocks when they were hunting for limpets when the tide was out. And even more so to see him carrying the basket containing the collections himself.

Now Nell *always* had to carry the basket, and I am afraid that had Tucker been asked she would have testified how often and often she had seen the two starting on a fishing expedition together in Scotland, with Archie marching grandly on in front with only a fishing-rod in his hand, while his sister followed at a little distance, weighed down with extra fishing tackle; a tin can containing water in one hand, a box of bait in the other, and the fish-basket slung over her shoulders.

Archie was anxious to prove to Phyllis not only that boys were not what he had nicknamed "monkey-squirrels," but that also they were not those rude and unmannerly beings which she seemed to consider them—dirty, untidy creatures, with rough hair, black hands, and bad manners at meals.

"I do believe," he had said to himself one day, "that she thinks we tear our meat with our fingers and put our knives in our mouths. He was therefore very much more circumspect in his ways in eating than usual, and it exercised a most salutary effect upon him.

In the matter of waiting upon other people at luncheon, Archie was not all that could be wished.

I do not mean that he was like some boys, who always supply their own wants first, take the last

thing in the dish, and invariably choose the nicest thing on the table without looking to see if there is enough to go round. Or who, if they *are* asked to look after other people first, do it in such a cross, unwilling way that they had better not do it at all. No, Archie was not so bad as that.

He would never have dreamt of getting his own tart or pudding and settling himself again in his place to eat it, while the lady next him was sitting with her plate unchanged in front of her, and the alternative of either going without any tart or pudding or of getting up herself to fetch it.

Nor would he have carefully got himself the sugar and cream, and poured the latter plentifully over his tart, and then been so engrossed in eating it as to omit passing on the cream and sugar to somebody else.

He was neither greedy nor selfish, and the boy I have described is both.

But he was a little forgetful sometimes and required reminding, and he was also a little clumsy and rough. On his mother, of course, he waited with pleasure, but, as regards Nell, though he *did* it, it was sometimes in a rather disagreeable way.

If she had not quite finished when he was changing the plates for other people, he would be rather impatient, and to save himself the trouble of

getting up again, he would want to take her plate away before she had really done.

Poor Nell often left a favourite little bit of pie-crust, or a tempting little heap of peas, because she did not like to keep Archie waiting behind her chair for a minute, and was alarmed at the impatient little shakes he gave it, and his muttered, "Haven't you done yet? What a time you are! I'm sure you have had quite enough," &c.

These remarks, be it well understood, were only for Nell's private edification. Archie would not have dared make them out loud, for Mr. Forbes would have been very angry. He was very particular in every way about Archie's manners, and his maxim was, "Begin with your sisters, and you will know how to behave to other ladies when the time comes."

Well, as I began by saying, Archie's anxiety to gain Phyllis's good opinion made him very particular in all these ways, and she never had to ask for what she wanted. He supplied all her wants before he gave a thought to his own, and seemed to know what she wanted almost before she knew it herself.

And it was all done quietly and promptly, and as if he took a pleasure in it.

There was one person who noticed how much

more civil and gentle Archie was with Phyllis than he was with his sister, and how much more considerate for her feelings in what he said and did, and who felt rather jealous for Nell.

This I need not say was Tucker; and she remarked upon it to Archie one day.

But Archie said it was all *quite* different—a different thing altogether.

Tucker demurred at this. She could not see any great difference between the two little girls.

She never *had* been able to see—and how often she had heard her master say the same—why a sister was to be treated less well than any other lady. But it seemed as if boys of his age were always of a different opinion.

It was “quite different,” Archie repeated.

Nell was used to his ways, and did not mind; but Phyllis was so easily scared and shocked, that he had to be more careful what he said and did. “She’s like a little bit of china,” he said, “and you know how careful you have to be with *that*! Now, Nell is common clay, like myself.”

But Tucker could not see this argument at all, and was highly indignant at his calling his sister “common clay.”

She fancied there was a hidden insult to Nell somewhere, and she branched off into a long de-

scription of Nelly's charms and virtues, and declared Archie was not worthy to have such a sister, as he seemed to appreciate her so little.

Warming with her subject, she gave Archie a serious lecture on his ways to Nell, and declared he had made her life a burden to her the whole time she had been at Sandbank; that she had borne it with the patience of an angel; and that all the reward she got was that he called her names behind her back. "Common clay, indeed!" she finished indignantly, "there isn't a more perfect little lady both in mind and manners anywhere. And see her in her best summer frock, and that picture-hat; why she looks like a little princess."

Archie did not dispute the point. He had had, as the reader knows, more than one attack of remorse on the subject of his sister, and many resolutions had been formed to be kinder and gentler to her when they were once more re-united.

"I was a brute, I know," he said, "but you must remember one thing, Tucker. I was sickening for the mumps, so I had a sort of excuse, hadn't I?"

Tucker agreed there was something in this, and the conversation ended amicably.

Archie was not, however, always quite so forbearing with Phyllis as what he had said during this conversation implied.

I am not prepared to say that Phyllis herself thought he treated her altogether like that "little bit of china" he had described.

He was a little impatient of her fears and fancies sometimes.

But perhaps any boy or girl of his age would have found it trying to discover that Phyllis had never in her life climbed a gate, and seemed to consider it an impossibility.

He found it out quite by accident, and it was no doubt a great shock. He had not expected anything *quite* so bad as this.

It happened in this way.

He and Phyllis and Tucker were taking a walk in the lanes behind the town of Sandbank. Tucker had fallen a good way behind, and the two children were walking on together.

As they went along, they came on one side of the road to the entrance to a cornfield, divided from the lane by a five-barred gate.

Phyllis, who was very fond of flowers, was attracted by some beautiful poppies, which she saw through the bars, growing in the cornfield.

"Look! what lovely ones," she said, pointing them out to Archie.

"We'll go in and get them," said he, "if you like."

Phyllis went up to the gate, and tried to undo the fastenings.

"It's locked, Archie," she said.

"Is it?" said Archie, vaulting over, and not in the least perceiving the meaning of her remark. "A careful farmer, isn't he? But there's no harm in going in now the corn's cut, and I want you to have the poppies. Come on."

Phyllis remained leaning against the gate, looking wistfully through the bars.

"Ain't you coming?" said Archie, whose back was turned, and who was busy gathering the poppies.

"I can't, Archie," she said, "it's locked. How can I?"

Archie turned round, and something in her very expressive countenance opened his eyes as to how matters stood, but he could hardly believe it, and, for the first time, he felt really angry with her.

But he tried to keep his temper.

"Are there no gates, then, in Suffolk?" he asked in a voice of forced calm, when he had really taken in that Phyllis considered the gate in front of which she was standing an insuperable bar to her progress.

"Oh yes!" said Phyllis, timidly. She saw he was provoked, and she felt nervous.

"Then, pray," he asked, still with awful calmness, but in a tone that Nell would have well known

presaged a coming storm, "pray what do you do when you come to them in the course of your walks?"

"T-u-rn ba-ck," was the faltering answer, and the timid voice died away into a whisper.

There was a moment's pause, and then Archie, feeling he could not stand it, turned away and took a little run in the cornfield, to recover the effect of this answer.

"A walk across country," he muttered to himself between his teeth, as he whipped the heads off several poppies to relieve his feelings, "a walk across country, and turn back, and 'turn back' at every gate."

When he came back from his little dance, Phyllis was crying.

"Oh, don't! don't!" said Archie, much distressed.

"I knew it would be like this," sobbed Phyllis. "I told you how prim and old-fashioned you'd think me, and you *wouldn't* believe it. You had better let me take my walks with Jorrocks for the future; indeed, *indeed* you had."

Archie jumped over the gate and tried to console her.

She controlled herself very quickly, and then said mournfully, "I *am* very stupid, I know. But it is not quite my fault about climbing gates and

palings. When I was little, Jorrocks wouldn't let me. She said it was unladylike. And afterwards I had my mother's dear old governess, you know. And she is very rheumatic as well as old. So of course *she* never climbs anything. Even if *I* got over, *she* couldn't. But, Archie, I am determined to learn, and you shall teach me. And I'll begin now, this minute."

So saying, Phyllis tightened her small mouth, and, with the air of a martyr going to the stake, she advanced to the five-barred gate (which *was* a particularly high one), and put her foot on the lowest bar.

"Hurrah!" said Archie, "you're a brick, Phyllis! Wait a minute and I'll help you. For it is a very stiff gate, I own, if you're not used to climbing. Now climb up a little higher, and I'll stand behind you, and shove you over."

Phyllis recoiled a little. She was not quite sure what being "shoved over" might entail.

Archie saw her shrink.

"Now do tell me," he said with the earnest air of one who is curious for information, "do tell me what it is you are afraid of. Are you afraid of sticking half-way, or are you afraid of turning giddy at the top, and toppling over, and breaking your neck, or something?"

Phyllis considered a moment.

"Because," he continued, too eager to wait for her answer, "if it's an *accident* you're afraid of, if *that's* all, you needn't mind a bit. I don't say there's the slightest fear. But supposing, for the sake of the argument, there *was* a risk of your breaking your arm, or leg, or any little thing of that sort, you needn't the least mind if I am by."

"Oh, why?" said the puzzled Phyllis.

"Because," he answered, "I know exactly what to do in any emergency 'till the doctor comes.' I've learnt, you know. Do you know what an 'ambulance class' is, Phyllis?"

No. Phyllis had never heard of such a thing.

"Sit down on the grass, and I'll tell you," said Archie, "and then perhaps you'll feel happier about climbing the gate. Tucker won't be here just yet, so I shall have time to explain to you."

"An ambulance class," he began, "and you mustn't mind, Phyllis, if I don't explain it very clearly, is a lot of ladies who meet together to learn from a doctor what to do in case of accidents. Well, some cousins of mother's had one at their house this year, and as they wanted a boy to practise bandaging on, I used to go. They used to bandage up my head, arms, legs—you never knew such a funny figure as I used to be, when each lady had

bound up some imaginary wound, or fracture, on some part of me. Well, of course, I used to listen to all the doctor taught them, and I learnt a lot. I sometimes think of being a doctor when I grow up. I think I've got a sort of natural turn for it. When I went home, I used to practise on Nell.

"I've learnt how to tear my pocket-handkerchief into a triangular shape, to tie up a wound that's bleeding, and how to make use of sticks and umbrellas to make what they call an 'improvised litter,' to carry a wounded person on, and all sorts of useful things.

"I've been looking out for accidents ever since, but I've not yet had the good fortune to come across one. I mean it seems a pity, you know, that so much useful knowledge should be thrown away. Then I know about bleeding a little. I haven't quite got this part clear, but I've got a sort of smattering of it; and I know by the blood whether an artery has been divided or not. And so you see, Phyllis, I could not only, if you had an accident, tie your wound or fracture up, and leave you safely and comfortably in a ditch while I fetched the doctor, but, if you were very much mangled, I could also, with Tucker's help, carry you straight to Sandbank on an 'improvised litter,' in time for the amputation.

"And, if you bled in spouts, and the blood

bright crimson, I should know you had divided an artery. I am not sure I could *do* anything to stop it, because that's the part of the lecture I wasn't much attending to at the time; but at any rate I should be able to tell you what you had done, and it's always satisfactory to know. And so you see, Phyllis, you need not be *over-fussy* about hurting yourself when you are with me. Now, come along, and I'll shove you over the gate."

Phyllis, who was one of those children whom the sight or thought of blood turns sick, had listened shudderingly to these, to her, ghastly details; and by the time Tucker came up had turned so white that Tucker noticed it, and asked her if she had a headache.

However, she stuck to her determination of climbing the gate, though feeling more faint-hearted than she had done before Archie's elaborate attempts to reassure her.

With Tucker's help on one side and Archie's on the other, she accomplished the feat in safety, and was rewarded by Archie's applause and a magnificent bunch of poppies.

CHAPTER VIII.

MRS. BROWN TO TEA.

"SHOULD you mind having Mrs. Brown, the landlady, to tea?" said Archie to Phyllis one day.

"Mind it!" she answered; "I think it would be great fun."

"She was very kind to me when we first came," he said, "and we were great friends. I am afraid I rather neglected her afterwards, and I don't feel quite comfortable about it. Do you know what a feeling called remorse is, Phyllis? Do you ever have it?"

No. Phyllis had not suffered in that way, but she knew what the word meant.

"Well, you're lucky," said Archie, "for it's a most horrid feeling. I often have it. I have had it sometimes about Nell, and now I've got it about Mrs. Brown. And I think I should get better if I had her to tea."

The immediate result of the conversation was a very polite little note written by Phyllis, composed by Archie, and worded in the following manner:—

Miss LORRIMER and Mr. FORBES
request the honour
of
Mrs. BROWN'S company
at five o'clock.
A verbal answer will suffice.

As soon as it was ready, Archie went into Tucker's room to ask her to take it down.

Tucker was sitting working when he entered. Her head was bent over her work, and she was shaking all over with soundless laughter.

Every now and then she said to herself, "Oh, dear me!" and "Well, I never!" and then again shook with the same soundless laughter.

Rather alarmed, Archie stood still and called out "Tucker! what is the matter? What *are* you laughing at?"

Tucker started violently, but when she saw Archie she laughed more than ever, slapped her knees, and put her handkerchief to her eyes, for she had laughed till she cried.

"Tucker! *do* tell me," said Archie, "what is it that amuses you so?"

But Tucker refused to enlighten him. "One must," she remarked, "have thoughts passing through one's mind, and young gentlemen could not

expect to know everything grown-up people were thinking about."

Archie was much offended.

He hated being kept in the dark, and he hated still more being treated like a child.

He, therefore, with an air of great dignity, said he was "sure he did not care to know if she did not care to tell him" (which, I am afraid, was not quite true).

Whereupon Tucker laughed more than ever, and Archie began to get rather provoked.

So he said nothing more on the subject of her strange hilarity, but gave her the note, and asked her with great pomp and loftiness in his manner whether, *when she was recovered*, she would be so kind as to take it to Mrs. Brown, and bring back an answer.

He then returned to Phyllis, and confided to her the strange state in which he had found Tucker.

They both puzzled over it, but could think of nothing that had occurred the least funny.

So they settled she must have had a letter from some of her friends that amused her, and she could not tell Archie what it was.

"Now I come to think of it," said Archie, "there was an open letter lying on the table by her side. Rather provoking," he added. "I hate

people having good jokes they won't hand on. It's selfish, I think. I do so enjoy having a hearty laugh; don't you, Phyllis?"

Phyllis agreed it was very delightful; but Tucker's entrance put an end to further discussion.

She was quite grave now, and was the bearer of a very polite message from Mrs. Brown, to the effect that that lady would be both proud and happy to accept the kind invitation she had received, and that she was much flattered at Miss Lorrimer's and Master Forbes's kind thought.

A grand consultation followed as to the tea and preparations, into which Tucker entered with her usual good nature. Archie wished to give a grand tea. There were to be toasted buns, muffins and crumpets, shrimps, jam, sardines, and fruit of two or three kinds.

"I'll come with you, Tucker, and shop," he said. "Will you go and put on your things? I say, Tucker, *do* tell me what you were laughing at just now. *Do*; and Phyllis wants to know too, *so* much."

Tucker, however, was not to be persuaded, and Archie reproached her severely.

"You really *ought*," he said; "when people have been ill they ought to be humoured. You seem to forget I'm only just out of an illness."

But Tucker was quite unmoved.

"Don't you be so *curious*, Master Archie," she said. "I should have thought you'd had a lesson."

Archie thought this was *very* mean of Tucker, and got crimson. But it shut him up completely, and he asked no more questions.

He lost sight of his temporary vexation in the excitement of buying all the provisions for tea; and he and Tucker returned home the best of friends, arm-in-arm and in high spirits, weighed down by packages of every size and shape.

There had been a little divergence of opinion as to the muffins and crumpets. Tucker had represented to Archie that, as Mrs. Brown would have to prepare the feast as well as to partake of it, it would be well not to give her much to do in the way of cooking. And these hot things gave a great deal of trouble.

Moreover, they had to be served up the last thing, and how could Mrs. Brown, asked Tucker pathetically, be putting on her best gown and be toasting muffins at the same time? These details had of course not occurred to Archie, and he reluctantly gave up the idea of muffins and crumpets, though he failed to see why Mrs. Brown should put on her Sunday best at all. *He* would just as soon see her in the nice cotton gown she usually wore. Or, if it really were absolutely necessary, why should

she not put on her best gown first, and cook the muffins afterwards?

These remarks Tucker treated with contempt, and dismissed with the observation that it only showed how little he knew, if he supposed anyone, and least of all Mrs. Brown, would be "cooking and messing" in their best gown.

Towards five in the afternoon there was a flutter of excitement in the little sitting-room. Archie, with very smooth hair, and Phyllis, in a clean cotton frock, awaited the arrival of their guest.

Tucker had advised them both to keep out of the way till tea was nearly ready, as Mrs. Brown, having two characters to sustain, was rather in an awkward position. While bringing up the tea and making the preparations she was the landlady in her usual gown and a large white apron.

By-and-by there would be a complete transformation, and she would appear as Mrs. Brown, the invited guest. It would be less embarrassing for her, if she and her hosts did not meet in the meantime.

Archie so fully entered into these difficulties, that he prepared himself to receive Mrs. Brown as if he had never seen her before.

"Well, Mrs. Brown!" he said, as his guest entered the room, smiling and bowing with her Sunday best

gown on, and a very smart cap. "Well, Mrs. Brown, and how do you do? This is my friend, Miss Lorrimer. Phyllis, this is Mrs. Brown."

Mrs. Brown, smiling and bowing, answered she was pretty middling, and that she hoped he and Miss Lorrimer were the same.

Archie, in his wish to make conversation, now quite forgot Mrs. Brown was supposed to be a stranger.

"Well, Mrs. Brown," he said, "so you see I have been a good let after all."

Mrs. Brown, who had put on her grandest language with her Sunday clothes, answered that she "sincerely wished his extended sojourn under her roof could have been made under more enjoyable circumstances."

Archie was trying to be his very civilest; but he felt he could not keep up to Mrs. Brown if she was going to talk like that. She did not seem to be a bit like she used to be when they talked over the incoming lodgers together.

"Well, now, Mrs. Brown," he said (his great idea of intense civility, the reader will observe, was saying her name very often)—"now, Mrs. Brown, you sit down, and I'll wait upon you, Mrs. Brown. Miss Lorrimer will pour out the tea."

Mrs. Brown protested against his waiting upon

her, but protested in vain. She was obliged to yield. She was obliged also to submit to have everything on the table, and the reader knows there was a bountiful supply, pressed upon her in turn, and sometimes twice over, by her eager host.

"Now for the tea," he said. "Oh! I say, Phyllis, that tea looks rather——"

"Rather weak," he was going to say, when he suddenly remembered Mrs. Brown had made it herself, and that it might hurt her feelings.

In his zeal for his guest, he made another mistake a little later on.

He began kindly but officiously buttering some toast for Mrs. Brown, and if, as the saying is, he "helped her as he liked her," his affection for Mrs. Brown was indeed overwhelming, and the consequence was the supply of butter ran short.

"Why, there's hardly any butter," he exclaimed; "I must ring for some more. What a stingy little bit they've given us to-day!"

Mrs. Brown looked rather uncomfortable, and half rose from her chair, as if anticipating having to answer the bell.

But Phyllis with great tact interposed. "Oh, don't ring, Archie!" she said, "there's plenty of butter. And you spread it far too thick. I am sure Mrs. Brown won't like it so thick."

All this gave Archie time to recollect himself.

"Oh, how stupid I am!" he exclaimed; "I've spread two pats on one bit of toast. Well, if you don't like it, Mrs. Brown, I'll eat it myself."

Archie was not at all satisfied with his guest's appetite. "Why, you positively eat *nothing*, Mrs. Brown," he said, as, his labours over, he seated himself at her side, and began his own tea and a lively conversation at the same time.

"Oh, Mrs. Brown," he said, "do you remember when we first came here, how you and I used to puzzle over the lodgers that were coming, and wonder who this mysterious Miss Lorrimer could be who was so particular? What fun it was! How little I thought she was going to turn into a little girl who was to be my greatest friend! How oddly things turn out, don't they, Mrs. Brown?"

"But then, you know, I always felt sure I should meet with an adventure here. I had quite a presentiment about it in the train. Oh, how well I remember arriving with Nell and Tucker, and driving through the lanes and coming suddenly on the sea! Do you know, Sandbank never looks a bit the same to me now as it did then, How funny it is that a place never looks to you the same again as it does the first time you see it!"

Phyllis quite agreed. She remembered how

Sandbank had looked the day she drove up in the rain: and she never *could*, let her shut her eyes ever so much, imagine it looking the same as it had that day.

"On a fine day," said the matter-of-fact Mrs. Brown, "a place will look very different to what it will do on a wet one. Brighter-like, and more sunny and cheerful."

"Well! but then the indoors part, too, looks quite different," said Archie, "the first time you see it. This room never looks to me a bit like it did when Nell and I came into it."

Mrs. Brown here pointed out that the room was *not* exactly the same as it had been. For instance, the tea-table was now in the window, whereas it had then been in the middle of the room. She might have added that there was a great deal more seaweed hanging up to dry from the bell-handle; and a more liberal supply of all the treasures of the sea in every direction than there had been on his arrival. Some very pointed remarks might also have been made as to the very different appearance of the muslin curtains and antimacassars. But she did not avail herself of the opportunity. Her prosaic turn of mind did not at all effect the flow of Archie's recollections.

"Fancy if anyone had told me," he went on,

"that the mysterious Miss Lorrimer would not only become my friend, but first of all give me the mumps, how astonished I should have been!"

Mrs. Brown cordially agreed that the chain of events had been a very singular one; and added that she could not help considering the mumps had formed a very disagreeable link in the chain.

"All's well that ends well," said Archie, "that's my favourite motto. What is yours, Mrs. Brown?"

Mrs. Brown had never given the subject very much consideration; but after a few minutes' thought she said she thought perhaps it was one of very much the same meaning as his own, "It's a long lane that has no turning."

"Capital," said Archie, "it's nice and hopeful, like mine. Tucker's is much more desponding, but she says it comes of living so much with children, which is not flattering to me and Nell. 'It's no use crying over spilt milk.' That's hers. She says it has 'set her up' when she's been in low spirits over things, over and over again: hasn't it, Tucker?"

Tea being now over, Archie cast about for some entertainment for his guest. He showed her all his drawings, photographs of his family and Castle Forbes, and added divers little traits of their ways and characters, to enable Mrs. Brown to understand them better. A bright idea suddenly seized him,

and he exclaimed, "Oh! have a game of draughts, Mrs. Brown? We'll get the table cleared in a minute."

He rang the bell, and was going to get the board out, when Mrs. Brown begged to be excused, as she was going to be rather busy this evening. The tactless Archie was beginning to ask her what in the world she had to do, when a warning look from Tucker stopped him. So he got up and held the door open for his guest to pass out.

"Good night, Mrs. Brown," he said, "and thank you."

"Thank *you*, sir," said Mrs. Brown, as with a parting curtsy she disappeared.

"I think it went off very well," said Archie, returning into the room, "only she ate very little."

"Tucker, what *were* you frowning at me for? There seems nothing but mysteries to-day. Laughing in fits this afternoon, and scowling at me this evening."

"No mystery at all," said Tucker, more hastily than the occasion seemed to warrant.

"Well, what was it then?" said Archie.

"I've known boys," said Tucker, severely, "to whom it would have occurred that as Mrs. Brown had to get ready her own tea and toast her own muffins, so she might possibly have to clear it away,

and wash up her own cups and saucers. Who did you expect to answer the bell, I wonder, when you rang in such a hurry?"

"How stupid I am!" exclaimed Archie. "Now perhaps if I hadn't she wouldn't have gone off in such a hurry. I wonder if we could get her back. I'll tell you what, Phyllis, I'll go down and wash the cups and saucers and you shall play draughts with Mrs. Brown."

But Tucker assured him Mrs. Brown's best tea service was far too precious in its owner's eyes to admit of her allowing it to run the risk entailed by any amateur washing up.

And anyhow it would be too late now.

Mrs. Brown would by this time have taken off her Sunday best gown and resumed the duties of everyday life.

And sure enough it was so.

For before the argument was concluded their late guest entered the room in her usual character, and, arrayed in a cotton gown and a large white apron, began clearing away the tea in a most business-like manner.

CHAPTER IX.

“SHALL WE EVER MEET AGAIN?”

TIME was now speeding on, and in spite of his joy at the thought of returning home, Archie found himself sometimes wishing the days would not go quite so quickly.

The doctor had mentioned a date when Archie might, with safety, rejoin his family, and that date was now not very far off.

Archie began to feel very sad at the idea of parting with Phyllis, and if *he* felt it, it was ten times worse for her. For she was being left to dullness and loneliness at Sandbank, and with nothing pleasant to look forward to: for when she returned to Lorrimer Hall it would be to encounter the dreaded step-mother, and to find everything changed in her old home.

Archie felt sure Phyllis often thought about it, though she said very little, for she looked very sad and thoughtful sometimes.

She was indeed very much depressed at the impending parting with Archie.

Companionship was as new to her as it was

delightful; and Archie was one who made everything seem amusing and exciting. She knew she should find her usual lonely life all the more lonely in consequence. She felt sure, also, that when he was gone all the old dread and shrinking from the thoughts of her step-mother, which his society had charmed away, would return in full force.

Her eyes filled with tears one day when he mentioned casually that Tucker was beginning to talk about packing.

"Oh, don't!" she said pitifully, "please don't tell me about it. It makes it seem so near."

"So it does," said Archie. "I wish almost I was not going so soon, Phyllis; I can't bear leaving you behind. I don't know how I am ever to say good-bye to you. It's a dreadful business."

"And there is nothing to look forward to either," said Phyllis, mournfully. "It will be good-bye for ever; for I don't suppose we shall *ever* meet again."

"Oh, Phyllis!" exclaimed Archie in dismay.

"I don't see why we should," she answered; "we never did before."

"Oh, but there are so many changes and chances in the world," said the more sanguine Archie; "the most unexpected things happen, and people turn up again in the most unaccountable

way. Why, I think it's quite certain we shall meet. You'll come to London, and as your father knows mine already, it's as easy as possible."

"He never brings me to London," said Phyllis.

"But perhaps he will *now*," said Archie.

"Ah, *now*!" said Phyllis. "I don't know how things will be."

Now, of course, meant under the new state of affairs at Lorrimer; and this brought back the step-mother to Phyllis's mind, and she looked very grave.

Archie was much bored, and wished he had said nothing about it.

"Do you know, Phyllis," he resumed, "I have a *presentiment* that you and I shall meet again? I *do* have presentiments sometimes, and they come true."

"Ah! you are a Scotchman," said Phyllis, "and believe in all sorts of superstitions, presentiments, and flights of crows, and odd noises, and all sorts of things. But I am not superstitious, and I don't believe in presentiments."

"Well, but Phyllis, you must believe in the one I had coming down in the train here!"

"What was it?" she asked, "I forget."

"Well, all the way down in the train, I had a presentiment that I should meet with a pleasant adventure at Sandbank, and you see I have."

"Do you call having the mumps a pleasant adventure?" asked Phyllis.

"Well, no, hardly," said Archie; "but never mind. Making friends with you was a pleasant adventure, and that was brought about by the mumps. So I believe in my presentiments just the same. And I feel quite sure that *some day, somewhere, and somehow* we shall meet again!"

"Ah, well!" said Phyllis, "I wish I could think so. But as you live in Scotland, and I in Suffolk——"

"But London, Phyllis, London," said Archie, "you *must* come to London some day. You can't live in Suffolk all your life long. *Everybody*, even country clergymen's daughters, come to London at some time or other."

"Oh! if you mean when I am a grown-up young lady," said Phyllis, "I suppose I shall, but that's a long time to look forward to."

"Why, *I* should be grown up too!" exclaimed Archie, suddenly excited. "Perhaps we shall be stiffly and pompously introduced to each other some day: a grown-up young lady in a Paris gown, and a smart young man, with a white rose in his button-hole. 'Allow me to introduce you to Miss Lorrimer—Mr. Forbes!' And then one of us will say, 'I think we met once, *years* ago, at the seaside!' What

fun!" added Archie, warming with his subject; "perhaps I might be in the Guards, and you might come to the Horse Guards' Parade on the Queen's birthday, and see me receiving the colours. You would ask someone, 'Who is that young officer?' and someone would answer, 'Oh, that is young Forbes of Castle Forbes, a most promising young soldier!' And you would say, 'Dear me! how time flies! I knew him when he was quite a little boy!'"

"O no!" laughed Phyllis, "I hope I should never be as affected as that."

"Oh, I don't know," said Archie, "grown-up people often say that. When mother says to her friends, 'This is my boy,' someone or other is sure to say, 'Dear me! how time flies! I remember him when he was so high!'"

"And they put their hand down to a certain height from the floor which one never could have been, unless one was a midget."

"Or I'll tell you another way we might meet, Phyllis."

"Supposing I *do* become a doctor after all, I might be sent for when you were very ill, and directly I began to feel your pulse, we should both start and say, 'Why! were we not friends once, years ago, at the seaside?' Oh, I say! wouldn't it

be exciting if I were the means of saving your life by my great skill: the rising young physician, young Forbes—eh?"

"Oh yes, very!" said Phyllis, laughing, for Archie looked so dreadfully in earnest; "but Archie, I don't think all this is much comfort. Meeting such ages hence, and being so different, is not much better than never meeting at all."

"Or stop!" continued Archie, who was not listening a bit to what Phyllis was saying, so occupied was he in inventing situations in the future. "Stop! Another thing. I might be making my first speech in the House of Commons, and you might be up in the ladies' gallery. You might ask, 'Who is that very good speaker who has just sat down?' And again the answer would be, 'Young Forbes of Castle Forbes.' And then you would say—well, what would you say, Phyllis? It must be something new, for I'm tired of that old 'met once, years ago, at the seaside.' It's got rather stale now."

"Well, let me see," said Phyllis, considering; "I might call out, 'Oh, Mr. Forbes! do you remember me giving you the mumps?'"

"*What*, Phyllis!" exclaimed Archie, transfixed with horror; "*call out!* In the House of Commons! From the ladies' gallery! Why you mayn't even

speaking above a whisper to the lady next you; and as to 'calling out' to the members below!—why, you've made me feel quite ill, Phyllis! I hope you'll never talk such nonsense again. I thought you were more sensible."

"But, Archie," said poor Phyllis, "how could I know? I've never been to the House of Commons, and I don't even know what the ladies' gallery is, or anything about it. You forget, I don't live in London like you."

"No, to be sure," said Archie, "that's true. I beg your pardon, Phyllis. Don't look so distressed about it. We'll make up something else, that you *would* know about. I might perhaps be a clergyman preaching for a charity. You might have come to church intending to give a shilling, and my sermon might have such an effect upon you, that you would empty your whole purse into the bag when it came round. And then you would begin to wonder who the wonderful preacher was; and you'd have to wait till you got outside the church, and there you'd see in large letters on the notice-board, 'The Sermon will be preached by the Rev. Archibald Forbes, D.D., &c. &c.' Oh, Phyllis! what an excitement it would be for you, wouldn't it? They are very exciting, these peeps into the future, ain't they?"

"I wish I was a boy," was Phyllis's answer. This remark appeared to Archie rather irrelevant.

"Why do you say that?" he said; "what's that got to do with what I am talking about?"

"A great deal," she answered. "I was thinking how a boy can grow up into almost anything and a girl into nothing. In these few minutes look what a lot of grand things you've been, and I've been nothing each time but a young lady in a Paris gown asking questions."

Archie cast his thoughts back, and saw he had been a "promising soldier," a "rising physician," a "good speaker," and a "wonderful preacher," and felt rather ashamed of his egotism.

"Oh, well," he said with a shy little laugh, "I don't know why I made myself out such a fine fellow; but it's more exciting, you know, to think you're going to be a great success. But it's all very easy to talk. I don't suppose I shall grow up anything particular—probably a dismal failure. It's much more likely I shall never pass the army examination at all than be a 'promising soldier;' and I dare say I should be a stupid doctor, a prosy speaker, and a bad preacher. Probably I should *kill* you, if you were my patient, instead of saving your life. And most likely you would whisper to your next-door neighbour in the ladies' gallery, 'I

wish that young man would stop; what a bore he is!' And as to the charity sermon, Phyllis; I'm afraid you'd only give the shilling you brought with you, if that! So you needn't mind; you'd be the pretty young lady in the Paris gown all the same."

"I shouldn't care much about that," said Phyllis.

"Oh, I don't know," he rejoined; "it's better than being ugly or having a pig's face, isn't it?"

"Oh well," laughed Phyllis, "perhaps it is; but, Archie, what I want is to meet again while we are still what we are now, and I am afraid we shan't."

"Oh, nonsense! we *must* meet again," said Archie; "it would be absurd and ridiculous to know each other so well and to be always together and then not to meet again; it *could not* be, Phyllis!"

"Ah, well! I hope you may be proved a true prophet," said Phyllis.

And though she sighed as she said it, she could not help being a little carried away by Archie's sanguine disposition and his certainty that all would turn out as they wished.

CHAPTER X.

GOOD-BYE TO SANDBANK.

PHYLLIS was sitting in her room next morning reading very quietly, when she heard the sound of feet scurrying up the stairs as if their owner was running for his life, hotly pursued by something dangerous.

Almost simultaneously, as it seemed to her, the door was burst open and Archie was in the room.

He was in a state of the wildest excitement, and he danced about waving an open letter in his hand.

"It's come true! it's come true!" he exclaimed.

"*What* has come true?" said the bewildered Phyllis.

"My presentiment," he exclaimed; "didn't I *tell* you so? Oh! isn't it delightful!"

"But you haven't told me what it is yet," she said.

"Don't you remember my saying last night I *knew* we should meet again, and that it would not be good-bye for ever? Well, what *do* you think mother says in her letter?"

"Oh, Archie, do tell me quick," said poor Phyllis, who was beginning to tremble with excitement.

"Well, I may as well tell you," said Archie, "for you would never, never guess. She says she has written to your father to ask him whether, instead of staying on alone at Sandbank, you may come to Castle Forbes with me until he is ready to have you home. There now! what do you think of that? And Archie flung himself down exhausted into a chair to watch the effect of his news on his listener.

Phyllis turned first red and then white. She tried to say something, but the words would not come.

Archie was quite alarmed. "Oh, I say," he exclaimed, jumping up, "you are going to faint! I know you are. Never mind, I know what to do, and I am not a bit frightened. You must lie down flat, with your feet a little higher than your head. Come on!"

So saying, he seized the unfortunate Phyllis and began pulling her down on the floor.

This treatment had the best possible effect upon her, for it made her laugh, and she disengaged herself from Archie's grasp, assuring him that she was not going to faint.

But her laughter was so closely allied to tears,

that Archie came to the front as a doctor once more.

"Hysterical!" he exclaimed, "oh yes! I know all about that, too. The thing is to scold and be very severe. Or, better still, a wet towel and slap the face with it. I'll get one."

He was rushing off, but Phyllis, with an effort, controlled herself, and told him there was nothing the matter.

"Sit down, Archie," she said, "and tell me more about it. I can't quite take it in yet. I'm all right now, I assure you. It was the sudden joy and surprise, and you took my breath away, rushing in like that. Please read me the letter. I *do* so want to hear it."

Archie still eyed her a little suspiciously, but he seated himself at last and began to read his mother's letter.

It was to the effect that Phyllis's father and step-mother were paying visits in Scotland and were coming to Castle Forbes just before returning to Lorrimer. That Mrs. Forbes thought it would be a delightful plan for Phyllis to come up to Scotland with Archie, and there await her father's arrival, instead of dragging out a long waiting time by herself at Sandbank. Phyllis, the letter concluded by

saying, would probably hear from her father on the subject.

"Isn't that *delicious!*" said Archie, folding up his letter. "Didn't I *tell* you I knew we should meet again? You don't say anything, Phyllis, you don't speak!"

"I *can't*," said Phyllis, "I feel too bewildered. It is too good to be true!"

"Not a bit," said the matter-of-fact Archie, "it's as true as true. How can it be anything but true when I've got it all in mother's own writing and a letter from Nell besides?"

"But, Archie," said Phyllis, "she only says she has *asked* my father. Now supposing he should say no?"

Archie's face grew very long. It had not entered his head that such a calamity was possible.

"Does he often say no when you ask him things?" he asked.

"He *can*," she answered. "I don't know that he often does. But he *is* very particular what I do and where I go, and he *has* said no to me."

Archie began to feel depressed.

"What sort of things does he say no to?" he asked gloomily.

"Well, let me see. There is a drunkard in our village at home," answered Phyllis, "who beats his wife, and I asked papa if I might try to reform him. I wanted to persuade him to take the pledge, don't you know, or join the Blue Ribbon army, or something of that sort, and papa said no directly. Then, another time, I asked him if I might, now that I was getting older, read some of the old story-books, or novels, I think you call them, which I found in the library, and he said no again."

Archie's hopes began to revive.

"Oh, that's nothing," he said; "lots of books I've wanted to read and mother has not allowed me. This sort of thing is quite different. Oh, I'm sure he'll say yes. Perhaps you'll get a letter to-morrow morning."

"I hardly like to let myself hope," said Phyllis, clasping her hands together, "because of the dreadful disappointment if it comes to nothing after all."

But this view of the subject did not at all suit Archie, who wanted to talk over all the possible delights in store.

"Fancy, Phyllis! you will know my mother and my friend! Do you remember saying nothing was more unlikely? Oh! it will be delightful. You will

be able to sympathise together about being only children, and she will tell you how she avoided being prim and old-fashioned, and teach you to row and swim and all sorts of delightfully un-*ladylike* things."

"But I thought she had married and gone away," said Phyllis, "and would not live in Scotland any more: you told me it would never be the same again."

"No more it will," he answered. "I don't call it *living* when you only come on a visit. Fancy being on a *visit* in your own home! But still, she will be there."

He got rather gloomy after this.

He had been so occupied with Phyllis lately that his "secret sorrow" had rather faded out of his thoughts.

But now it all swelled up again. He relapsed into silence for some time, and when he next spoke it was on a totally different subject.

Archie's sanguine expectations were fully realised.

Phyllis received a letter from her father the very next day, telling her of the kind invitation he had received for her, and that he had gladly accepted it.

"It fits in admirably with our own plans," he said, "for we have promised to pay a visit to Castle Forbes on our way south ourselves, so we shall join you there and all travel home together. I expect to find my daughter quite a tom-boy after this long companionship with young Forbes."

This letter gave both children untold satisfaction, and Archie was specially pleased with the concluding sentence.

Phyllis now allowed herself to give way to all sorts of pleasant anticipations.

The thought of seeing Archie's home, and making acquaintance with Nell and his mother and his friend, was very delightful; and to be introduced to her step-mother under such happy circumstances seemed to deprive that dreaded moment of a great part of its sting.

The last days at Sandbank passed very quickly, and the morning of departure came.

The children found that, after all, they were rather sorry to leave, and they went over all their old haunts together, and grew quite sentimental about the back-garden and the tree which had been the means of introducing them to each other.

They were to start by an afternoon train, and when they arrived in London were to drive straight

to the Great Northern Station, to catch the night train to Edinburgh.

Jorrocks, who had never travelled at night before, thought all these arrangements very extraordinary and most fatiguing; and Archie did nothing but laugh at her.

She objected also very much to Phyllis's wandering about with Archie, "knocking herself up," as she expressed it, before starting.

"Why, Mrs. Jorrocks," said Archie, "that is just what is so far the best plan. She will tire herself out, and sleep all the better in the train. Nell and I *always* do it."

They had themselves photographed together on the beach for Mrs. Brown's special benefit, and they went in together to present the "likeness," as she called it, to her.

Mrs. Brown was much gratified, and said that as long as she lived it should always have a place on her mantel-piece.

The flys came to the door very punctually, and after a warm farewell to Mrs. Brown, who stood on the doorstep, smiling and bowing to the last, the whole party drove away.

Both Phyllis and Archie were silent and thoughtful on their way to the station.

Phyllis was beginning to feel a little shy at the prospect of going among strangers, and Archie was reviewing the past five weeks, and feeling he should never forget the lessons he had learnt during his stay at Sandbank.

It is the duty of the State to protect the property of its citizens and to maintain the peace and order of the community. The State is also responsible for the education and welfare of its people. The State should also protect the rights of its citizens and should not interfere with the freedom of the press and the right of assembly.

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PART III.

INTRODUCTIONS;

OR,

A LESSON OF PREJUDICE.

PART II.

INTRODUCTION.

A LESSON OF PRINCIPLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE JOURNEY TO SCOTLAND.

LONDON looked very deserted as they drove through it from station to station.

Phyllis was rather interested in what she saw, as she so seldom came to London; and she amused Archie very much by asking if St. Pancras, which they passed on their way, was the House of Commons.

They arrived in King's Cross in time to partake of a very substantial repast before they settled themselves in the train.

Tucker had secured a very nice compartment all to themselves, and the elaborate preparations for their comfort during the night were just completed when the train started.

Archie assured Phyllis that he never slept in the train—never!

And that he should be ready at any hour of the night to converse with her, if she was wakeful.

He sometimes closed his eyes, it was true; but she must not be deceived by *that*. He was not really asleep. He was aware of everything that was going on, and never missed a station.

Nevertheless, towards ten o'clock, she did not find him a very lively companion. One or two intelligent remarks she addressed to him met with very incoherent answers. From being incoherent they became unintelligible, and finally ceased altogether.

She therefore disposed herself to sleep on the seat Jorrocks had prepared for her; and very soon she was in the Land of Dreams, whither Archie had for some time preceded her.

"Edinburgh! Edinburgh!"

This was the sound that woke Phyllis from a refreshing sleep the next morning.

She was dreaming of Sandbank, and started up, thinking Jorrocks was calling her.

Her bewildered expression, when she opened her eyes and found herself in a railway carriage, with Archie sitting opposite to her, made him shout with laughter.

"At last!" he exclaimed. "I've been awake for *hours!* And I wanted to wake you a long time ago, when we were going over the Border, but Jorrocks wouldn't let me."

Phyllis sat up, and tried to collect her thoughts.

"The Border," she said, "what is that?"

"Where England and Scotland join," he answered; "but now, Phyllis, here we are in Edinburgh, and we're going to get out in a minute and have breakfast. Isn't it jolly?"

"Do we stop here a long time?" asked Phyllis.

"Just long enough to breakfast and wash our hands and faces," he answered, "and then on we go again. Come on. Let's get out." They all proceeded to the waiting-rooms, and made themselves clean and tidy; and then went on to the refreshment-rooms, where an excellent breakfast awaited them.

In about an hour they were settled in the train again, and continuing their journey.

The day passed very quickly. Archie talked all day long, and explained and pointed out divers landmarks and objects of interest in the beautiful country they were flying through. The short autumn day closed in early, and the light waned very quickly. Archie, exhausted with his exertions to entertain Phyllis, fell asleep. Jorrocks and Tucker also dozed.

But Phyllis could not sleep. Directly all was quiet in the carriage, her thoughts began to be busy, and her face grew grave and sad.

Since her friendship with Archie, she had had but little time or opportunity for meditating on the coming change in her home, which had so constantly filled her mind when she first came to Sandbank. During the journey Archie's excitement had kept her going; but with the waning light her spirits waned too, and her heart sank as she thought that in a week after her arrival at Castle Forbes the dreaded introduction would take place.

A large omnibus was waiting for them when they arrived at their destination, and it did not take long to get the boxes on the top and the party inside.

They drove off at a very quick pace.

Archie was now wide awake and in the wildest spirits, so that Phyllis had no further opportunity for brooding over her troubles.

She was beginning to feel very shy. For all were strangers to her, and she had never been amongst strangers by herself before.

This feeling increased as the omnibus drove up in front of Castle Forbes, and she saw the hall door was wide open, and that Archie's father, mother, and Nell were all standing there waiting to receive them. Phyllis was at the inner end of the omnibus, but Archie was at the door. He was out in a minute, and in the arms of all his relations. While

exclamations of how well he was looking, how grown, how sunburnt, resounded on all sides, Phyllis sat quite still in her corner; till Nell, escaping from the family group, got into the omnibus and gave her a kiss.

"Oh! I'm so glad you've come and so glad to know you at last," she said. "Come out, and let me introduce you to mother."

But by this time Archie was to the front, and as the two little girls stepped from the omnibus, he rushed forward, exclaiming, "Oh, no Nell! She's *my* friend; I must introduce her to mother."

And the shy blushing Phyllis was dragged forward and presented to Mrs. Forbes.

"There she is, mother; this is her."

Phyllis's shyness was almost dispelled by Mrs. Forbes's kind motherly greeting.

Taking her hand and telling her how pleased she was to have her at Castle Forbes, she led her into the house, followed by the rest of the party, and all went into the dining-room, where tea was waiting.

It was a very merry meal, but Phyllis was very tired and shy, so she did not take much part in the conversation.

Mrs. Forbes soon perceived this, and proposed to take her up to her room and leave Archie to

finish his tea in the society of his father and sister.

Phyllis assented, and Mrs. Forbes conducted her up to the pretty little bedroom which had been prepared for her, with Nell's room on one side and Jorrocks on the other.

The latter, who was in the room unpacking, gave it as her opinion that the sooner Miss Lorrimer went to bed the better, as she was quite unused to all this "racketing about at night," &c.

Mrs. Forbes, therefore, kissed her very kindly and wished her good-night, hoping she would find her little bed comfortable, and that she would wake up quite rested and refreshed in the morning.

"You will soon feel quite at home with us I hope, dear," she said, "and you know your father will soon be here; we expect him on Saturday."

Phyllis started, blushed, and said she had not known it would be quite so soon. She thought he had said it would be a week after her arrival.

"He *did* settle it so at first," answered Mrs. Forbes, "but he changed afterwards. How glad you will be to see him! It is a long time now since you parted, is it not?"

"Yes," faltered Phyllis! "it was some little time before I had the mumps."

She was annoyed with herself for the hot flush she felt mounting into her cheeks, and for the tears she felt coming into her eyes. She *could* not help it.

The thought of the introduction to that unknown step-mother being four days nearer than she had expected startled her, and made her poor little heart beat strangely.

Do what she would to drive it away, a feeling of depression came over her.

Ah, indeed! as Mrs. Forbes said, how happy she would have been, had things been different, to see her father again, after being so long parted from him.

What a pleasure it would have been to hear he was coming so soon, had he been, as in the old days, alone!

But with this unknown person at his side!

The thought of this stranger came like a dark shadow between her and him.

Mrs. Forbes noticed her agitation and changed the subject directly.

She talked of Archie and Sandbank, and laughed over the "mystery of the blue veil" till Phyllis began to get a little more cheerful.

But her spirits sank again when Mrs. Forbes left her, and sad thoughts filled her mind till she slept.

CHAPTER II.

CASTLE FORBES.

PHYLLIS woke the next morning rather late, and found Jorrocks at her bedside with a little tray.

Mrs. Forbes, Jorrocks said, wished her to breakfast in bed, as she thought she wanted a good long rest.

Master Forbes, Jorrocks added, had been up and out ever since seven o'clock, and she had only just stopped him in time from hammering at Phyllis's door to invite her to get up and come out with him.

Phyllis was not sorry to have her breakfast quietly and alone.

In spite of the pleasure of waking up to find herself at Castle Forbes, the same feeling of depression which had overpowered her the night before, attacked her directly she awoke.

All her old fears and misgivings about the future, which her late happy life with Archie had thrown into the background, returned with full force upon her.

Next Saturday! only next Saturday!

A great lump came into her throat as she thought of it, and she hid her face in the pillow and felt utterly forlorn and miserable.

Meantime, downstairs, Archie, in full flow of talk and spirits, was sitting with his father, while the latter had his breakfast.

Mrs. Forbes always breakfasted upstairs.

"I am sorry to say, my boy," Mr. Forbes was saying, "that I am obliged to be away nearly all day to-day on county business, and must start almost immediately; so our plans and arrangements together must wait till to-morrow."

Archie was not so disappointed as might have been expected. His head was full of Phyllis, so he was quite content to be left to entertain her for the first day.

He watched his father drive off in the dog-cart, and then went to the boudoir to see if his mother had come down.

He found her established on her sofa, and quite ready for a chat.

"I've hardly seen you yet, mother," he said, as he drew a chair to her side and sat down, "and I've got so much to talk to you about."

He then launched forth and told her all about Phyllis and his plans for her.

His great desire, he said, was that she should

become acquainted with his friend, Lady Margaret, as soon as possible, and that they should have a good long talk together. There were so many things, he felt sure, that Lady Margaret could teach her and tell her.

"Well, Archie," said his mother, "it will be very easy to bring this about. For Maggie returned to Lochside last week; and I think it would be a very good plan, as your father is away to-day, if you all went over to Lochside this morning."

Archie had been so full of Phyllis that he had for the moment quite overlooked his own grievance as regards Lady Margaret, but his mother's proposal brought it all back upon him in a minute, and he got very red.

"Oh no, mother," he said; "not to-day. I *couldn't* go to-day, it's too soon."

"But, my dear child," said Mrs. Forbes, "I think Maggie will think it strange, and perhaps unkind, if you don't go and see her."

Archie fidgeted from one leg to the other, and then stammered out, "Will he—will *he* be there?"

"Very probably he will," she answered; "in short, of course he will. But he will not bite, Archie, and you must meet him sooner or later; so what is the good of putting it off?"

"If I could meet her alone *first*," said Archie,

“it would make it all so much easier. And besides, you know this long talk I want her to have with Phyllis must be quite private, of course. Well! if this—this man is sticking there all the time, it will be no use. Phyllis is very shy and reserved, and the only chance to get her to talk out what she is thinking about, is to have her quite alone.”

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of the footman with a note.

“From Lochside,” he said as he gave it to Mrs. Forbes, “and wait for an answer.”

Archie blushed, and walked away to the window.

His mother read the note and called him to her.

“How Maggie spoils you!” she said. “This note is to say she will be alone to-day, as her husband and her father are shooting on the moor, and her mother is upstairs with a head-ache; and that if you children like to come and spend the day, she will meet you in the boat at the loch.”

“Oh, how jolly!” exclaimed Archie; “it’s the very thing; we shall have her quite to ourselves, and, after a bit, Nell and I can contrive to leave Phyllis alone with her. I must go and tell her and Nell directly.”

“Then I may accept the invitation?” said Mrs. Forbes, smiling.

“Oh yes, yes!” said Archie, “by all means ac-

cept it, and send the footman off with the answer quick. We'll start about an hour before luncheon."

He went up into the school-room in search of his sister. Phyllis had come down, and the two little girls were sitting together.

Phyllis heard of the invitation with mixed feelings.

She felt very shy, and suggested that Archie and Nell should go without her. At the same time she had a great wish to see the friend of whom Archie had talked so much.

"Oh, that would never do," said Archie; "it's most important you should know her, and you may not get such another chance as this. She is quite alone to-day."

"You needn't feel shy, Phyllis," said Nell; "no one can feel shy with Maggie."

Archie noticed directly he got into the school-room how sad Phyllis was looking. But he thought it best to make no remark, and proposed that she should now come out with him on a tour of inspection of all the different attractions of Castle Forbes, of which she had heard so much.

There would be plenty of time, he said, before they started for Lochside.

So two hours were spent wandering about in all Archie's favourite haunts, and Phyllis was not at all

disappointed. It was all quite as nice, she said, if not nicer, than she had expected.

At about half-past twelve the three children met in Mrs. Forbes's boudoir before starting on their expedition.

"Good-bye, mother," said Archie. "I can't at all tell when we shall be back; so don't expect us until you see us."

"Good-bye, dear," she answered. "I quite expect you will come home delighted with your *bête noire*, Maggie's husband."

"Oh, I shan't see him," said Archie. "I shall take good care to come away before he comes home from shooting. Come along, Nell and Phyllis."

And Archie marched off with his two little companions. Phyllis was a little happier now. She had enjoyed her morning immensely. To her, this free roaming about with companions of her own age was as new as it was delightful; and she forgot her troubles, for a time, in the enjoyment of the present moment. They descended deeper and deeper into a beautiful glen, and she wandered on in front, lost in admiration of her lovely surroundings.

The brother and sister fell behind.

"Nell," said Archie, speaking shyly with his head turned away, "have you seen her yet?"

"Oh dear, yes," said Nell, "lots of times. I've been to Lochside every day since she came."

"You never told me in your letters," said Archie.

"But, Archie dear, I thought you wouldn't like it. You know you never let me mention her name even, at Sandbank."

"Well, tell me now," said Archie, rather bored. "Is she just the same, or does she seem like a new person?"

"Just exactly the same," answered Nell; "you'd never remember she was married, except for all her new rings."

"And *he*," said Archie, turning his head away again, "have you seen him?"

"Oh yes," said Nell eagerly, "and I *do* like him so much. He is so kind and nice. It seems to me that instead of losing our old friend, as you used to think we should, we've got a new one added on."

"That's *so* like you, Nell," said Archie, "taking up with new people. I *hate* new people and new friends."

As Archie spoke, Nell's eye rested for a minute upon Phyllis's figure in front, and then turned upon Archie with a peculiar expression. But she said nothing.

"I think, Archie," she resumed presently, "that you are *sure* to like him. He's so——"

"Oh, shut up," said Archie roughly; "I don't want to hear about him."

He had hardly said the words before he regretted them.

He had made so many resolutions about being kinder and gentler to Nell, and now he had broken them already.

Before, too, he had been one day in her company.

He walked on by himself, feeling very sorry. It seemed such a pity, just as they were reunited after such a long separation.

And what made him regret his rude words even more, was the consciousness that Phyllis had overheard them.

She had turned round just as he was speaking, and a look of astonishment and disapproval had passed over her face.

Phyllis now drew nearer to Nell, while Archie stalked on by himself. She looked shyly and compassionately at Nell, expecting to see her dreadfully troubled, or else very much offended.

But Nell returned her look with a smile.

"Oh, that's nothing," she said laughing. "Archie often speaks like that to me. I'm quite accustomed

to it. Oh, he's a boy, you know, and you can't expect much from them; and then I'm his sister, so he doesn't care what he says to me. It doesn't matter, you know. I don't mind—much. Of course I'd rather he didn't; but it's no use wishing."

And Nell gave a little sigh.

Archie overheard all this, and I need hardly say how annoyed he was.

He felt that all Phyllis's feelings against boys, which he had been at such pains to dispel, would probably now revive. The work of a fortnight at Sandbank was probably undone by Nell's few words.

Still he didn't feel angry with Nell. What she said was quite true. There was no one to blame but himself; and if he was only half a gentleman, he told himself, he should apologise.

He *would*, yes, he would; and nothing should prevent him.

"Now or never," he said to himself. "Strike while the iron is hot."

He made a determined effort, and to Nell's intense astonishment he wheeled round, and with a beaming smile said, "I beg your pardon, Nell, for being so rude just now. It shan't happen again."

Phyllis's face expressed pleasure and approval,

but poor Nell was quite shy and overcome by this new departure in Archie's conduct.

She felt quite uncomfortable, and sincerely wished Archie had not apologised to her. It seemed so unnatural for him. She laughed nervously, and said, "Oh! you weren't very rude, Archie. That's nothing for you to say. And I'd rather you said what it pleases you to say."

This somewhat awkward dialogue was happily interrupted by the scurrying of a rabbit across the glen; and Archie, with a wild cry to his dog, dashed after it, and disappeared down the hill, shouting and yelling, the dog barking wildly at his heels.

Phyllis drew back and looked rather scared.

"Isn't it rather cruel of him?" she said.

"Not for a boy," answered Nell. "It's *sport*, you know."

"I'm very old-fashioned, I know," said Phyllis; "but it seems to me cruel, and not much sport for the poor little rabbit."

She was beginning to be confirmed in her old idea, that Nell would suit her best.

After a time Archie came back, hot and breathless, and said the rabbit had got away, to Phyllis's great satisfaction.

They were now nearly out of the glen, and after crossing a road and some fields they came to

the shores of a beautiful loch, lying still and quiet in the autumn sunshine. It was wooded nearly all round; the trees seemed to go down almost into the water. In the distance, among the foliage, the top gables of a house were to be seen.

"There!" said Archie, taking off his cap and throwing it into the air. "Hurrah! Look, Phyllis, that is Lochside!"

CHAPTER III.

A DAY AT LOCHSIDE.

"SHE'LL be here soon," said Archie. "This is where she always meets us."

He led the way as he spoke down to the water, where a tiny little pier jutted out into the lake.

"See, Phyllis!" said Archie. "This is where we make the boats fast. Maggie and her boat will be alongside very soon. Right out there, just round that clump of trees you see in the distance, is a sort of little bay, and her boathouse is there. That's where she'll start from. But you won't see her till the boat is round the corner, because of the trees."

"Will she come alone?" asked Phyllis.

"Of course!" said Archie. "Do you suppose *she* wants a boatman? She won't even have anyone

to steer. She can manage a boat perfectly. If I was in the boat with her, or Nell, we should steer; but it is not necessary."

Phyllis looked wistfully and admiringly at Nell. "Can you row as well as steer?" she said.

"Oh, yes," said Nell, smiling. "It isn't at all difficult, Phyllis; you would soon learn."

"Look! look!" cried Archie excitedly; "I see her! Here she comes! Now, Phyllis, you'll see what an only child can do!"

A small boat shot out of the foliage in the distance with a single figure in it.

Phyllis gazed fixedly at it, and soon made out a slight girlish figure, wearing a sailor hat, managing the boat with great dexterity, which skimmed over the water, making straight as an arrow for the little pier.

It came nearer and nearer, and Archie took off his hat and waved it, shouting "Hurrah!"

He ran out to the extreme end of the little pier, and as the boat came alongside he sprang into it with a joyous shout, and threw his arms round the lady's neck.

Phyllis could not hear what they said, but she thought one seemed just as pleased as the other at meeting again.

But the conversation did not last long. Archie

busied himself making the boat fast, and Lady Margaret, rising, put the oars down, and, leaping lightly on to the pier, came towards the two little girls.

Nell took Phyllis's hand and said, "We've brought Phyllis with us—this is her."

"Ah! the little girl with the blue veil," said Lady Margaret smiling, and she took both Phyllis's hands in hers, and kissed her very kindly. This little remark made Phyllis feel quite at her ease. She had been feeling rather shy just before; but this showed her that Archie's friend knew all about her, and her kind voice and manner at once impressed Phyllis in her favour.

Archie, having made the boat fast, now leapt out of it, and came hurrying up. "Oh, Nell," he said, "*you* oughtn't to have introduced her. Phyllis is *my* friend, you know."

"Well, never mind," said Lady Margaret, "introduce us over again."

"I want you to be *very* great friends," said Archie, "for there are lots of things I want you to talk to Phyllis about."

"But you haven't introduced us yet," said Lady Margaret.

"Oh, I forgot," said Archie; "well, now then.

Let me introduce you to Miss Phyllis Lorrimer. Phyllis, let me introduce you to Lady Maggie——”

Archie suddenly came to a dead stop. He did not, thanks to his own perversity, know what Lady Margaret's name was! All he knew was that it was no longer the name he used to know her by. Here was a dilemma! He blushed, stammered, ashamed that Lady Margaret should see his ignorance, and afraid she would be rather hurt with him for his want of interest in her concerns.

“Well, Archie!” said Lady Margaret, “why don't you go on? Here are we two ladies waiting to make friends with each other, and cannot do so until our introduction is complete!”

Archie felt very uncomfortable. He *fancied*, he couldn't be *quite* sure, but he rather fancied, from something in Lady Margaret's voice, that she was laughing at him, and that someone had told her how oddly he had behaved about her marriage, and that she was rather enjoying seeing his discomfiture.

“Bother!” he muttered to himself; “why do people change their names?” but he did not say it loud enough for anyone to hear.

“You should not keep ladies waiting, Archie,” said Lady Margaret again.

This time there was no mistake about it. She

did understand his dilemma and she *was* laughing at him.

He looked up quickly, and saw suppressed merriment in every part of her face, and as she met his eye she laughed outright.

"Oh, foolish, foolish boy," she said. "Well, it does not matter! Phyllis will excuse the surname, I dare say."

"Lady Maggie is quite enough," said Archie, trying to brave it out; "and oh! *may* she call you Maggie, like we do?"

"She may call me anything she likes," said Lady Margaret, laughing; and she took Phyllis's hands again. "I ought to have said, 'Welcome to Lochside, dear,' but Archie did not give me time. And now we will all get into the boat and start."

Archie bounded in, and began to unmoor the boat.

"You can take the sculls, Archie," said Lady Margaret, "and Nell can steer. Phyllis can sit by me. And sit still, Archie. Everybody is not so fond of rocking about as you are."

She seemed to guess that Phyllis might be a little nervous, for Archie's uncertain movements swayed the boat.

Phyllis was conscious of a feeling of strong

confidence in Archie's friend, as she sat down close to her, and as she noticed Archie's prompt obedience.

He took up the sculls and they started.

Lady Margaret talked pleasantly as they skimmed along; and after asking a good many questions about Sandbank, and the mumps, and the journey, she turned to Phyllis with a smile, and said:

"Archie is very anxious you and I should be great friends."

"Oh yes," said Archie, before Phyllis could answer, "you really must. There are so many things I want you to teach her, and to tell her about. You are both only children, you see, and 'Birds of a feather should flock together.' Phyllis is very ignorant in some ways, and has odd ideas about things. She used to think it was unladylike to get over a gate, and she never knew, till I told her, that girls and ladies rowed boats, and swam, and all that."

"All that sort of thing depends entirely on circumstances," said Lady Margaret, looking kindly at Phyllis, who blushed crimson at having her shortcomings made public. "I dare say if Phyllis had had a home like me, on the shores of a loch, instead of being brought up in an English county, she would have rowed and swam too. Probably *I*

should not otherwise have learnt these things. It is not, you know, actually necessary for a girl."

Phyllis's sense of truth would not allow her to take the excuse provided for her.

"We have a good-sized lake at Lorrimer," she said shyly, "but there's no boat upon it, nor ever has been as long as I can remember."

They were now approaching the shore on the other side, and entering the little bay of which Archie had spoken.

They all got out, and walked up to the house.

"Luncheon will soon be ready," said Lady Margaret. "I must just run up and see how my mother is, and you can amuse yourselves in the garden."

The three children passed a pleasant half-hour. It was a charming garden, and there was a delightful tent on the lawn-tennis ground.

They came in very hungry for luncheon.

"Now *do* have a talk with Phyllis," said Archie, eagerly, detaining Lady Margaret as they left the dining-room after luncheon. "Nell and I will go and have a scramble all about, and leave her alone with you."

"Very well," said Lady Margaret, "but what is it in particular you wish me to say? Tell me a little."

"Well, you see, it's like this," he answered. "She is, you know, really, rather prim and old-fashioned and not active, though she's *much* improved since I knew her. But she's got it into her head that all only children *must* be like that; and I want you, as you were situated just the same at her age, to explain to her that it's not necessary, and how to avoid it. She thinks, too, that being what she is prevents people taking to her, and that they think her dull and stupid. Now, if you could just throw in that you rather like the looks of her, I think it would be a great comfort. For, you see, I dare say Nell has told you, poor Phyllis has got a step-mother she's never seen, and she's firmly persuaded the step-mother will take a dislike to her, because she is old-fashioned and prim. And she dreads meeting her. I'm afraid she's thinking about it to-day a good deal, for she's got her sad look on. You see the meeting is not far off now. I *do* feel so sorry for her. I think it must be *awful* to be going to have a step-mother, don't you?"

"I never was in such a position, so I can't tell," answered Lady Maggie, "but I dare say it is an alarming thought. Does she dislike the idea very much?"

"Yes," said Archie, "but do you know I some-

times think it is more that she is afraid of her step-mother not liking *her*, than of she herself not liking her step-mother. She is so very humble about herself, poor Phyllis."

"I am glad it is that," said Lady Maggie. "I thought perhaps that Phyllis, being a lonely child, had probably read a great quantity of story-books, and taken her ideas of step-mothers from them. You know in story books they are generally disagreeable, and in fairy tales positively cruel."

"Yes, I know," laughed Archie; "they turn their step-daughters into maids-of-all-work, and don't give them enough to eat. Oh no! Phyllis is far too sensible for that. Her maid, Jorrocks, was rather inclined to say things against the step-mother and Phyllis never would listen. She's *awfully* good, Phyllis is, and she's got such a respect for her father that she thinks what he does *must* be right. She stopped me once when I was going to call her step-mother a horrid woman."

"Oh, Archie!" exclaimed Lady Maggie, "did *you*? Why should you abuse the poor unknown lady? You ought to have helped your little friend, and not made it worse for her."

"Well! I know," said Archie, rather ashamed, "it *was* not right of me. But somehow I had such a vision of this woman, with a squint and a

brown complexion, and that kind of oily-looking black hair, don't you know? that I couldn't help feeling for Phyllis, having her always stuck there—and——"

He broke off rather abruptly, for he suddenly remembered that on the occasion he had been abusing Lady Maggie's husband, and calling him a horrid man.

"It won't be long now," he said, to change the conversation, "before Phyllis and her step-mother are introduced to each other; for Mr. and Mrs. Lorrimer are coming on Saturday. Maggie, *you* must come and talk to her about Phyllis, and explain to her what a dear little girl she is. Will you?"

Something in the speech seemed to amuse Lady Margaret very much; but she only said, "I must know little Phyllis myself, dear Archie, before I can explain her to anyone."

"But you are going to!" he said eagerly; "you're going to have this talk; and Nell and I will keep away an hour, or more, so as to give you plenty of time. And then, in the next few days you can teach her to do all the things you used to do at her age."

"Oh dear!" laughed Lady Margaret, "you seem to think I am a conjuror. How am I to teach her,

in a few days, things I was years in learning myself? But I will do my best," she added, seeing Archie's look of disappointment.

She and Archie then followed the two little girls into the drawing-room, and Archie explained to them what the arrangements were.

He and Nell went off into the garden, and Phyllis, feeling rather shy and frightened, found herself left quite alone with Archie's friend.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TALK IN THE TENT.

"WILL you come and sit in the tent, dear?" said Lady Maggie. "It will be pleasanter out there than in the house."

Phyllis shyly assented, and followed her into the garden.

"Archie is determined you and I shall have a good chat together," she said with a smile, as she established Phyllis in a little wicker chair, and sat down by her side. "He seems to think there is so much alike in our circumstances, that we ought to be good friends. And he seems, also, to think that I could be of some help to you. I am sure, dear, I shall be very glad to be so if I can."

Phyllis felt her shyness lessening under the influence of Lady Maggie's kind words and manner.

She hesitated a moment, and then said, "I want to know how you managed not to be prim and old-fashioned like only children always are. I thought till Archie told me about you that all only children were like me, *must* be so; and Archie says you never were. He says that in some ways you've always been more like a boy than a lady; and I want you to teach me to be the same."

"So that is the compliment he pays me, is it!" said Lady Margaret, laughing;" "I must say I think it is a doubtful one! And I am not at all sure that your father would wish to see the same result in his little daughter. He would not thank us, perhaps, Archie and me, if we turned his gentle little girl into a tomboy!"

"Oh, I think he would," said Phyllis. "I am sure he would like to see me more like other children, and then it's not only him. It's—it's——"

"It's what, dear?" said Lady Margaret; "don't be afraid of speaking out. Archie has told me a good deal about you, and I shall quite understand. Let me help you, if I can."

A longing to talk to someone about her troubles, and to get a little help and sympathy, had come over Phyllis ever since she arrived at Castle Forbes.

She felt that the relief of telling someone about them would be enormous; and she had almost made up her mind to speak to Mrs. Forbes, but had felt too shy to begin.

She felt now as if she could not bear it by herself any longer.

So, when Lady Margaret spoke to her in that kind and gentle way, and offered her the help of which she stood so sorely in need, the gates of her reserve were unlocked, and her shyness melted away.

All that she had been brooding over the night before in bed, and during the journey, came pouring out, and to her own surprise she found herself telling all that she had kept to herself for so long.

She owned, far more than she had ever allowed herself to own to Archie, how she dreaded the advent of her step-mother; how she feared it would separate her from her father, and that everything would be changed in her life at home.

She was certain, she said, that her step-mother would dislike her, and think her in the way.

She was sure she was not the kind of child a step-mother would take to.

She was not gay and amusing and attractive like some children, and her step-mother would think her a dull, prim, grave, old-fashioned child.

Why, even her aunts and uncles, her own mother's sisters and brothers, said the same.

And, worse than all, she feared her father might be disappointed with her—even angry.

The thought of the impending introduction, she said, frightened her, and made her more nervous than anything else.

For, even if afterwards she got on pretty well with her step-mother, she knew that the actual introduction could not be anything but a failure.

She knew she should not and *could* not be anything but stiff, shy, and constrained.

"And, oh!" she finished, "what I dread so is that papa will think I am doing it on purpose, and that I am determined to dislike her, to behave badly to her. And it *isn't* that, oh! it really isn't that."

And poor little Phyllis, fairly overcome broke down and sobbed, and said she was so miserable that she did not know what to do.

Very kind arms were put round her, and her head drawn to a resting-place on Lady Margaret's shoulder.

"My dear child," she said, "instead of troubling your poor little head about what may never be, listen to the advice I am going to give you."

She began enlarging on the evils of prejudice

or preconceived opinions of, and objections to, people you have never seen, and warned her against Archie's way of taking dislikes to people you know nothing about.

She instanced his unfounded prejudice against her husband, which, she said, was very annoying to her, and most unjust to him.

And then she begged Phyllis to put all preconceptions out of her head, as to her future life at home, and the change the new arrival might, or might not, make in it; and to *wait* until she could judge by experience of what must now be purely imagination and speculation.

"And as to the actual meeting," she said, "*don't* conjure up imaginary scenes in your head. It will probably be all quite different to what you expect; and anyhow, the more you think about it beforehand, the more shy and constrained you will be when the time comes, and the more likely to give the very impression you wish so much not to give. Leave it all to come naturally, and don't fancy your step-mother will dislike you. Why should she? I never saw you till to-day, as you know, and my impression of you is that you are a very dear little girl, and one that it would be very difficult not to love. Why should not she think the same?"

I cannot reproduce word for word all Lady

Margaret said, but the effect upon Phyllis was that her spirits rose as she listened.

The future began to look more bright and hopeful, and she felt herself gathering strength and courage with every word that fell from Lady Margaret's lips.

Never, in all her after-life, did she forget that hour in the tent, and the help she then received in a great crisis of her existence.

"You will take my advice?" said Lady Margaret earnestly, when she had finished. And Phyllis put her hands into those of Archie's friend, and faithfully promised to do so.

CHAPTER V.

INTRODUCTIONS.

THE silence that followed on the conversation was broken by the entrance of Archie at the opening of the tent.

"Well," he said, "you *have* had a capital long talk. But it is my turn now, Maggie, and I want you all to myself."

Phyllis took the hint and joined Nell outside the tent, while Archie, seating himself in the vacant chair, began eagerly inquiring into the results of the conversation.

He was very much satisfied with all Lady Margaret told him, and much gratified by her praises of his little friend—her gentleness, humility, and good sense.

"We began by a little lecture on prejudice," said Lady Maggie, "and she took all I said so nicely. And now, Master Archie," she said suddenly, "it is your turn. You are going to have a lecture on prejudice too. But before that begins, you are going to have one on your unkind and selfish behaviour towards me."

Archie looked rather frightened.

"I think," she went on, "the way you have behaved and are behaving towards me is disgraceful, positively disgraceful, I do indeed. Take the unkindness first. Considering the length of our friendship and its intimacy, I ask you whether it was kind, never so much as to have sent me a message or written me a letter from beginning to end. Dear little Nell at once wrote me a dear, kind, little letter saying how sorry she was to lose me, but hoping I should be happy in my new home. And I waited and waited for a letter from you but never a line came, and why? I can't think why."

Put before him in this light, Archie for the first time felt his conduct *had* been very unkind and all his good reasons for it fled. He could not think of a word to say.

"I will tell you why," said Lady Maggie, "and I am going to be very severe."

"Oh no," said Archie, "*I'll* tell you. I could not bear you making a new friend and liking him better than your old ones."

"And yet it seems to me, Mr. Archie, you don't mind making new friends yourself. I ought to have asked your leave, I suppose you think. And yet you never asked my leave to make such friends

with a strange little girl you picked up at the seaside, that you must needs bring her home with you."

Archie muttered something about "mumps," and it being "quite a different thing," and "rather hard when he was all alone," &c. But Lady Margaret would not accept his excuses.

"Oh no, Archie," she said, "be fair, and own that you have been very selfish. You would not allow me to make a new friend. What would you have thought of me, now, if I had written to you and told you you must not make friends with little Phyllis?"

"Oh, I *should* have thought you unkind," said Archie, warmly.

"Or," continued Lady Maggie, remorselessly, "what should you have thought if I had refused to see her to-day or to be introduced to her or have anything to do with her?"

Archie was loud in his assurances that he would, indeed, have been hurt and disappointed.

"And yet," she said, "this is exactly what you are doing as regards *my* new friend. You do not wish to see him or to know him. You don't even know his name; you have never taken the trouble to inquire, though, for the matter of that, it is my

name too. When you wanted to introduce your old friend to your new one, you actually did not know what your old friend's name was!"

Archie blushed deeply and was obliged to own that such was, indeed, the case.

"Tell me now," he said quite meekly.

"No, indeed I shall not," laughed Lady Margaret, "you may find it out for yourself now, as a punishment for your bad behaviour. But," she added, more seriously, "you have been very foolish all along, Archie. And it is not only foolish but *wrong* to take prejudices against people you have never seen. And you will, in this instance, find yourself so very much mistaken, I know, for your *bête noire* is just the kind of man you admire. And he is very clever and well read, so that he could answer any question you like to ask him. Amongst other things he is the best shot that has ever been to Lochside. My father was saying so only this morning."

Archie made no answer. He did not know what to say.

"And you really like him yourself?" he said, after a pause.

"Yes," she said laughing; "I really like him very much, and so will you when you know him."

I am going to introduce you to him this very afternoon."

"Oh, I say!" exclaimed Archie in dismay, "please don't."

"This very afternoon," she repeated, as if he had not spoken. "He is coming home early from shooting on purpose, and we are all going to meet him."

Archie said nothing more, and Lady Margaret rising left the tent and joined Nell and Phyllis on the lawn-tennis ground.

"Come along, dears," she said, "it is cooler now, and we are going to meet the shooters, as you children used to call them, coming home from the moor."

Phyllis understood in a minute that this meant she was going to introduce Archie to her husband, and she glanced compassionately at him.

Archie looked meek and crest-fallen. He trudged after Lady Maggie without speaking, and Phyllis walked behind with Nell. They left the garden and went through some woods till they reached wilder-looking country and soon came to the moor.

Phyllis had never seen heather before, and she and Nell fell still further behind to admire and to gather it.

Archie and Lady Margaret walked on in silence.

"Hark!" she said, suddenly stopping; "I think I hear them."

She had only just said the words when a figure came in sight across the moor, and showing clear and distinct against the sky-line.

"I thought so," said Lady Margaret. "Here they are."

This foremost figure Archie knew well; it was old Lord Lochside, Maggie's father, and he ran forward to meet him.

"Well, my boy," exclaimed the old man cheerily; "well, old mumpy-lumpy, and how are you? Glad to see you back."

And it took Archie some minutes to answer all the questions put to him as to his health, journey, &c.

He was conscious all the time of looking out for and expecting the approach of a second figure, which he felt could not be very far behind.

"Where is Philip, father?" said Lady Maggie, smiling; "Archie is in a great hurry to be introduced to him."

"He is just behind," answered Lord Lochside. Then, giving Archie a dig in the ribs, he added, "Your *bête noire* is not very far off. You and I both owe him a grudge, don't we, for carrying her off."

Take a shot at him! you'd like to, wouldn't you! I'll lend you my gun. Now, then, a steady aim. Here he comes!—— Look out, Philip! here's a dangerous young fellow here who would like to put a bullet into you if he could!"

Archie turned, blushing and confused, to greet a tall dark gentleman who now came up and took his hand.

Archie did not raise his eyes for a moment, but curiosity impelled him at last to take a look at Maggie's husband.

He met grave kind eyes looking down upon him, but as he looked their expression changed.

They wandered from Archie to something or someone in the distance, and a bright loving smile stole over the grave countenance.

At the same moment Archie heard a startled cry, and, turning round, he saw Phyllis running forward with flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes, and in another moment she was clinging to the stranger, who stooped down and kissed her fondly. Then, disengaging himself from her embrace, he led her to Lady Margaret with a fond, proud smile.

"You have made friends already, Maggie," he said, "so I need not introduce you."

"My dear little girl," said Lady Margaret, taking the trembling, confused child in her arms and

kissing her tenderly, "don't you see it all now? Poor child! how puzzled she looks! Don't you understand, dear? Archie's *bête noire* is your own dear father, and it is *I* that am your step-mother! . . ."

CONCLUSION.

THE story ought properly to end here; but a few concluding words of explanation seem necessary.

So I will ask the reader to leave Archie and Phyllis in their bewilderment, and to return with me to the boudoir at Castle Forbes, where Mr. Forbes, not long returned from his county business, is sitting by his wife's sofa.

"He knows by this time," he said laughing, as he looked up at the clock on the mantelpiece.

"Poor Archie!" said Mrs. Forbes. "What will he say? How astonished he will be! Rather offended too, I dare say, at being the victim of a plot. He hates being out of a secret so. And for Nelly to be in it, and he out of it, won't please him at all."

"Serve him right," said his father; "it won't do him any harm. He really has behaved very badly towards his old friend, from the very first."

"Still, he will be very pleased, I think," said Mrs. Forbes. "At any rate, for Phyllis's sake."

"Rather sold, too," said Mr. Forbes. "For if

he took little Phyllis into his confidence at all, I have no doubt he freely abused the unknown stranger to his little daughter. Halloa! here he comes."

A scampering was heard on the gravel outside, and in another moment Archie, hot and breathless, bounded in by the open window.

Every sort of expression was painted on his flushed and excited countenance.

Uncertainty, questioning, bewilderment, and agitation; but pleasure and satisfaction certainly predominated.

He stood quite still in the middle of the room, and the only words that escaped him, were, "Oh, I *say!*"

Meeting his father's eye, he for a moment looked ashamed and blushed crimson, and then he joined heartily in the burst of laughter with which he was greeted.

"Well, you're a pretty fellow!" said Mr. Forbes. "And you *have* put your foot into it!"

"Mother!" said Archie, turning to her imploringly, "did you know it all the time?"

"Yes," laughed his father. "Everybody knew it. You've been the victim of a plot, Master Archie; but a plot which at any moment might have broken down if you had ever condescended to ask the name of Maggie's husband. What a *duffer* you have been!"

"I *have* put my foot into it," mused Archie, blushing all over as he thought of all he had said and done. "Why, I've called Phyllis's father every sort of name to her face! I've told her I should like to kill him, and I've told Maggie only this afternoon that I was convinced she had a squint, and a dark brown complexion, and oily black hair. I've—— Oh dear! oh dear!" he broke off, "what have I *not* done and said?"

And he looked so confused and distressed that his mother was quite sorry for him.

"How did little Phyllis take it?" she asked, to divert his thoughts.

"I don't know," he answered. "I was so muddled that I slipped away. No one missed me. They were all taken up with Phyllis. And I felt I could not face Phyllis's father or Maggie either; so I ran home as fast as I could."

"Well! you *are* a brave boy," said his father.

"And what about Nelly?" asked his mother. "And how did you get over the loch?"

"The boatman was there," answered Archie. "And I'm sorry to say I forgot all about Nell."

"You're a nice fellow, certainly," said Mr. Forbes, rising and putting on his hat. "And I suppose I must go and look after these young ladies for you, and bring them home." Archie was not

sorry to see his father go. He wanted to talk it all over quietly with his mother, and his father *would* laugh at him, which Archie could not bear.

"And was it a pleasant surprise, darling?" said she, as soon as they were alone.

"Oh yes! yes!" said Archie, "whichever way I look at it, it is delightful; and for Phyllis, something too wonderful. Only I wish—— I wish I had behaved differently about the marriage! It makes it all so awkward, and it might have been so pleasant. And I've got such a headache, and feel altogether in such a muddle, that what I should like best would be to sit quite quiet, while you explain to me all about it from the very beginning. Will you, mother?"

"Poor boy," said Mrs. Forbes, "it has been almost too much for you. You look quite exhausted: come and sit down by me here, and I will unravel the whole plot for you."

Archie gladly closed with this offer, and having established himself in a chair close to the sofa, prepared to listen.

"Of course," she said, "before you went to Sandbank I knew, and you might have known if you had cared to ask, that Maggie was going to marry Sir Philip Lorrimer, but I did not know him personally. And I knew also that he was a widower

with one little girl. But you had been there a long time before I discovered that his little girl was at Sandbank, and that she and your little neighbour were one and the same person. Indeed, it was not until you had got the mumps and Nelly came up to London. I wrote to you, if you remember, at that time, and told you her father and yours were friends, and that you might make acquaintance with her. It was your father's idea that you should not be told more than this; and it was, of course, strictly true, as I had not, even then, made Sir Philip's acquaintance, for he was away in Scotland, and had been for some time. But your father had always had a slight acquaintance with him at the House of Commons. Your father himself wrote to Maggie, and told her, and begged Sir Philip in his letters to his little daughter, not to drop a hint to her that her boy friend at Sandbank was her new step-mother's greatest friend and nearest neighbour.

"So every avenue was guarded. No one was allowed in their letters to say a word that could in any way throw any light on the subject. Still, as your father said just now, the whole plot might at any time have broken down, if you had discovered that Maggie's new name was Lorrimer. Everything hung upon that.

"It became necessary, after a time, to take

Tucker into the secret, and it was the day she received my letter that you found her in those fits of laughter which puzzled you so much. It was then that we had arranged among us that Phyllis should come up here with you. This was the last act of the plot, the closing scene of which has been enacted to-day; namely, that you should all go over to Lochside, that Phyllis should make friends with Maggie before she knew she was her step-mother, and that then the double introduction should take place.

"This was the grand *dénouement*, and now the curtain has fallen on the last scene, and I hope everybody connected with the little drama will 'live happily together ever after.'"

"Oh! I am sure they will," said Archie, drawing a long breath. "Oh, mother! it is delightful to think that Maggie is Phyllis's step-mother, and that there is no dreaded introduction to that other horrid woman looming in the distance for her."

"And you've quite forgiven Sir Philip for carrying Maggie off?" said his mother, pleased to see that in his thoughts for Phyllis he had forgotten himself, and his own old grievance about the marriage.

"Oh! I've forgiven *everybody*!" exclaimed Archie, "and everything. Indeed I don't know that I had anything to forgive, after all. I never thought, till

Maggie told me to-day, that *I'd* made a new friend myself and wouldn't let *her* have one. It *was* rather hard, now I come to think of it, and very selfish too. Oh! I've *quite* got over it, mother, and forgiven everybody all round—oh!—except Tucker! That *wretched* Tucker. I *must* go and revenge myself upon her,” and he rose from his seat.

“She couldn't help it, poor thing,” said his mother; “she was under orders from head-quarters.”

“Oh! but she needn't have laughed and giggled in that ridiculous and tantalising way,” said Archie. “I *must* go and have my revenge, mother, but I won't be long.”

Tucker was sitting quietly at her work upstairs.

She was thinking of the scene probably going on just now at Lochside, and as she worked she once more, as at Sandbank, shook all over with soundless laughter.

Consequently Archie, when he opened the door, found her in the very same condition that had so irritated him on that famous occasion.

“Revenge! revenge!” he cried, as he rushed into the room, and, springing upon her back, he put his arms round her neck and shook her until she cried for mercy.

“How dared you laugh and giggle in that ridiculous manner at Sandbank?” he kept on saying,

as he hugged and shook her. "How dared you slap your knees in that idiotic and provoking way? How dared you say, 'Oh, dear me?' and 'Well, I never——?' "

But the very recollection of that day set Tucker off again, and she grew weak and faint with renewed laughing and with the weight of Archie on her back.

But her laughter was infectious, and he did not mind now that he was in the secret too.

So he loosened his hold and joined heartily in it.

Finally, he requested her to dance a sort of war-dance with him round and round the room, in honour of Phyllis's good luck and of the general satisfactoriness of the whole state of affairs.

The exhausted Tucker at last sunk upon her chair breathless, and Archie returned to his mother.

When he got back to the boudoir his father and Nell were there. He looked eagerly round for Phyllis, but she was nowhere to be seen. Nell ran up to him, and kissed him, and told him how remorseful she had always been at knowing what he did not know, and being in the plot against him.

And Archie, who was in the highest spirits, told

her it did not matter a bit, and invited her to come into the garden with him and talk it all over.

And talk it over they did, from the very beginning to the very end.

Nell, too, was able to tell him a great deal that he wanted to know as to what had happened at Lochside after he left, how happy Phyllis was and how happy Lady Maggie was, and how pleased Sir Philip was to find his little girl so delighted with her new step-mother.

"But where is Phyllis?" interrupted Archie, "What has become of her?"

Nell answered that the whole party was coming to Castle Forbes on Saturday, and that in the meantime it was settled on all sides that, until they came, Phyllis should devote herself to *her* relations, and that Archie should devote himself to *his*. That, therefore, Phyllis was to remain at Lochside and Jorrocks and the luggage were to be sent over immediately.

"And I think it's a good plan," said Nell, wistfully, "for, Archie, I've hardly seen you since you arrived."

Archie agreed, though this sudden wrench from his almost hourly companion of the last fortnight gave him rather a pang.

But he felt he had a great deal to atone for as

regarded Nell, and that it would be better to devote himself entirely to her, and to begin at once to carry out the resolutions he had formed regarding her.

And he went to bed that night very happy. All that he dreaded in the way of introductions, both for himself and for Phyllis, was over, and nothing in the world could have turned out more delightful or more entirely satisfactory.

He put his resolutions in force the very next morning. And the reader will be glad to hear that he succeeded so well in carrying them out, that a day or two after Nell confided to Tucker that she did not know what had come to Archie.

Dear and nice as he had always been, he was dearer and nicer than ever, and so much gentler and kinder.

"And what *do* you think, Tucker? He kissed me of his own accord, and said he hoped I would forgive him for being so cross and disagreeable at Sandbank."

And then on Saturday Phyllis came.

And she looked so radiant and so happy that Archie declared he hardly knew her the first moment. It was quite a different face, he said, to the face which he used to see by his bedside at Sandbank.

The meeting was a very joyful one and they had a long, long talk.

Lady Margaret sent Phyllis on with Jorrocks an hour or two before the rest of the party, on purpose that she and Archie might have a little quiet time together.

Phyllis was, indeed, brimming over with joy, and she told Archie that not all he had told her about Lady Maggie had half prepared her for what she found "mamma," as she shyly called her, to be.

Archie was much excited when the word fell from Phyllis's lips.

With all his imagination, the idea that Phyllis would call Lady Maggie "mamma" had *never* occurred to him.

"Don't you remember when you introduced us at the loch," said Phyllis, "you asked her if I might call her Maggie, and she said, 'She may call me whatever she likes?' Well, that is what she meant. She said I was to do just as I liked, and that I needn't call her mamma unless I liked."

"And you *do* like?" said Archie, eagerly.

"Oh yes!" said Phyllis, "I like it very much. I am proud and glad to do it, for I loved her before I knew the truth for her kindness to me that day in the tent. Do you know she says she had the greatest difficulty in not telling me all about it

when I was so miserable. She says 'she longed to take me in her arms and discover herself to me.' "

"How jolly it is!" said Archie, "and how glad I am we've got rid of that other horrid woman."

"What other horrid woman?" asked Phyllis.

"Your step-mother that we thought was to be," he answered.

"Oh, poor thing!" laughed Phyllis, "she was a myth, you know; she never existed."

"But your father isn't a myth," said Archie, "and he existed all the time I was saying all sorts of things against him. Fancy my arch enemy being your father! *Do* you remember my calling him a horrid man and saying I should like to kill him? You didn't like it, I remember, so I think you must have had some sort of presentiment about it, without knowing it. Well, Phyllis, at any rate you stopped me calling Maggie a horrid woman; I shall always be grateful to you for *that*. And one other thing I knew I had to say—oh! about Tucker laughing and giggling that day at Sandbank; well, it was all about this secret. That very morning she had got mother's letter, telling her."

I think Archie would have talked on for ever like this, but the mention of Tucker made Phyllis wish to go and see her under the new and happy circumstances.

"She has always been so kind to me," she said, "and I am sure she will be glad for me. Shall I find her upstairs, Archie?"

"Up in her room, most likely," answered he, "and then, after that, mother and Nell want to see you in the boudoir. I think we've said all we've got to say, and I shall go now and wait for 'your mamma' in the drawing-room."

Archie sat down when he reached the drawing-room and drew a long breath of satisfaction, as he thought over the past, the present, and the future.

But his own immediate future made him feel a little shy. He was just a *little* dreading meeting Lady Maggie after all this, and he thought he would rather get it over alone, away from Sir Philip and especially away from his father. If all three were present and all three laughed at him, he felt it might be very unpleasant. So this was why he ensconced himself in the drawing-room, because he knew she would come in there on her way to the boudoir; and he thought Sir Philip would probably be shown in to his father in the library.

He was roused from his reverie by a step in the garden outside the window, but he thought it was Nell and did not look round.

"Have they arrived?" said a laughing voice. "I have come to fulfil my promise."

Archie blushed crimson, for it was Lady Maggie's voice, and he had not expected her to come in by the drawing-room window. He feared she must have walked up from the loch instead of coming in the carriage sent to fetch her, and if that were so, probably Sir Philip had done the same and was not far behind.

However, he jumped up and ran to welcome her.

"What promise?" he said as he kissed her, "and who did you ask me had arrived?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Lorrimer," she answered. "Don't you remember you told me you expected them to-day, and you made me promise to come and talk to Mrs. Lorrimer about Phyllis and explain to her what a dear little girl she is? I've done my best, as you asked me, to make her less prim and old-fashioned before she makes the acquaintance of this dreadful woman with the squint and the dark brown complexion; but I don't know if I've been sufficiently successful to soften the step-mother's hard heart. I'm afraid Mrs. Lorrimer will turn her into a maid-of-all-work, but I may help the poor child by giving her a good character. So make haste, Archie, and introduce me before Phyllis comes."

"Oh, *don't, don't!*" said Archie, hardly knowing

whether to laugh or to cry, "please don't go on like that."

To add to his discomfort Sir Philip now came in by the window, followed, to poor Archie's dismay, by Mr. Forbes.

The latter at once came up to him and said, "Allow me, my dear boy, to introduce you to Mr. and Mrs. Lorrimer, who have just arrived. She *has*, as you see, a squint and a dark brown complexion and oily black hair, but you'll get used to it in time, I dare say."

Lady Maggie stood there smiling, with the sun shining on her bright fair hair and delicate complexion, looking full at Archie; and he, like a hunted hare in the midst of its tormentors, looked imploringly first at her and then at his father as if for protection.

It came from an unexpected quarter.

Sir Philip came forward.

"Don't tease the poor fellow any more," he said. "I at least owe him a large debt of gratitude and must take his part. Let bygones be bygones. All's well that ends well."

As he spoke he put his arm round Archie, and in his grave quiet manner, which reminded Archie every moment of Phyllis, he thanked him for all his

kindness to his little daughter, and for having made her solitary stay at Sandbank so happy.

"The acquaintance must not end here," he said with a smile; "it must be no mere seaside friendship. You and your sister must come to Lorrimer and help to make my little Phyllis as gay and active as you are yourselves."

Archie was radiant, and no one who heard him eagerly accepting the invitation would have imagined him to be the same boy who had so violently snubbed poor Nell, when she had suggested a visit to Lady Maggie's new home.

"Well!" said Mr. Forbes, "I shall leave you, Archie, to make your peace with your old friend. I certainly think you owe her an apology for all your past behaviour. Come along, Lorrimer."

Sir Philip and Mr. Forbes then went away, and Archie and Lady Maggie were left alone.

There was a most satisfactory reconciliation, and she assured him all was forgiven and forgotten, and that she would never say a word about it any more.

After this they went into Mrs. Forbes in the boudoir, where Nell and Phyllis were having tea.

It was a new interest to Archie to watch Phyllis and her step-mother together, to note the happy terms on which they seemed to be, and to see the

look of love and confidence with which Phyllis regarded her.

Indeed, he was so occupied with this new and engrossing study that he hardly spoke a word.

"We think of spending the evening on the water," said Lady Maggie when tea was over, "you and I and the two little girls. Do you like the plan, Archie?"

There could be but one opinion, and the carriage was ordered, to drive them all down to the loch.

The Lochside boat was moored to the little pier, and they all got in.

"You and Nell can each take an oar, Archie," said Lady Maggie, "and Phyllis will steer."

At the same moment Phyllis, with a shy proud look at Archie, sat down and began to show off her new accomplishment.

Archie's surprise and delight were so great that he nearly upset the boat with the start he gave.

It was a lovely evening. They skimmed gently along in the golden autumn sunset, and all were very happy, but very quiet.

The thoughts of all were busy and there was silence for some little time.

Archie, of course, was the first to break it.

“Just fancy!” he said. “If it hadn’t been for mother’s long illness, which prevented us going to Scotland as usual, we should never have gone to Sandbank, and none of this would have happened. Or if Phyllis had not had the mumps, and so been sent to Sandbank, she would have remained at Lorrimer and we should never have made acquaintance. Isn’t it odd how the least little thing happening, or not happening, might have made the whole thing different!”

Nell was eagerly agreeing with him, and beginning to furnish other instances of a like nature, in other circumstances, when Lady Maggie interrupted them gently, and told them that was not the way to look at it.

She began to talk very quietly and gravely of an Unseen Hand which is ever ruling and disposing of all the events of life, for His own wise ends and purposes. And of how, all through the tangled and devious paths of life, that guiding and restraining Hand is to be traced.

“It is,” she said, “perhaps more a lesson of later life, when some part of the journey has been travelled, and you can look back upon the space lying behind you. But still even for children, if they look for It, that Hand is to be seen in the apparently insignificant details of their little every-

day life. And when you are as old as I am, you will realise that what seemed to us at the time chance, or accident, was really all part of an Infinite plan, and that we have only been instruments in working it out.

"But inasmuch as God does not always perform miracles, but works out His ends by human means, and makes use of the materials lying to His hand, it is interesting, and not unprofitable, to trace the second causes by means of which the results have been brought about.

"And so," she went on smiling, "we will now, each of us, say what we consider to have been the second causes in the little drama which has just been played out. First me, then Archie, then Nell, and then Phyllis. And *I* say," she concluded, suddenly stooping down and kissing Archie's brow, "that this dear boy, by his kind appreciation and laudation of his old friend, was the means of preparing her a place in her little step-daughter's heart."

Archie's eyes sparkled with pleasure, as he warmly returned Lady Maggie's embrace.

"And *I* say the mumps!" he exclaimed triumphantly. "Hurrah for the mumps!"

"And *I*," said Nell, "say the tree in the back-garden."

"And what do *you* say, Phyllis?" asked Lady Margaret of her little step-daughter, "it is your turn now."

"*I*," said Phyllis, smiling, and looking shyly at Archie, "I say a *Blue Veil*!"

THE END.



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Henry Lytton Bulwer (Lord Dalling): Historical Characters 2 v. The Life of Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston 3 v.

John Bunyan: The Pilgrim's Progress 1 v.

Buried Alone 1 v.

F. H. Burnett: Through one Administration 2 v.

Miss Burney: Evelina 1 v.

Robert Burns: Poetical Works (w. portrait) 1 v.

Richard F. Burton: Mecca and Medina 3 v.

Mrs. B. H. Buxton: "Jennie of 'the Prince's'" 2 v. Won! 2 v. Great Grenfell Gardens 2 v. Nell—on and off the Stage 2 v. From the Wings 2 v.

Lord Byron: Poetical Works (w. portrait) 5 v.

Cameron: Across Africa 2 v.

Thomas Carlyle: The French Revolution 3 v. Frederick the Great 13 v. Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches 4 v. The Life of Friedrich Schiller 1 v.

Alaric Carr: Treherne's Temptation 2 v.

Maria Louisa Charlesworth: Oliver of the Mill 1 v.

"Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family," Author of—Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family 2 v. The Draytons and the Davenants 2 v. On Both Sides of the Sea 2 v. Winifred Bertram 1 v. Diary of Mrs. Kitty Trevelyon 1 v. The Victory of the Vanquished 1 v. The Cottage by the Cathedral 1 v. Against the Stream 2 v. The Bertram Family 2 v. Conquering and to Conquer 1 v. Lapsed, but not Lost 1 v.

Frances Power Cobbe: Re-Echoes 1 v.

Coleridge: The Poems 1 v.
Chas. A. Collins: A Cruise upon Wheels 2 v.

Mortimer Collins: Sweet and Twenty 2 v. A Fight with Fortune 2 v.

Wilkie Collins: After Dark 1 v. Hide and Seek 2 v. A Plot in Private Life 1 v. The Woman in White 2 v. Basil 1 v. No Name 3 v. The Dead Secret 2 v. Antonina 2 v. Armadale 3 v. The Moonstone 2 v. Man and Wife 3 v. Poor Miss Finch 2 v. Miss or Mrs.? 1 v. The New Magdalen 2 v. The Frozen Deep 1 v. The Law and the Lady 2 v. The Two Destinies 1 v. My Lady's Money & Percy and the Prophet 1 v. The Haunted Hotel 1 v. Fallen Leaves 2 v. Jezebel's Daughter 2 v. The Black Robe 2 v. Heart and Science 2 v.

"Cometh up as a Flower,"
Author of— *vide* Broughton.

Fenimore Cooper: The Spy (w. portrait) 1 v. The two Admirals 1 v. The Jack O'Lantern 1 v.

George L. Craik: Manual of English Literature & Language 2 v.

Mrs. Craik (Miss Mulock): John Halifax, Gentleman 2 v. The Head of the Family 2 v. A Life for a Life 2 v. A Woman's Thoughts about Women 1 v. Agatha's Husband 1 v. Romantic Tales 1 v. Domestic Stories 1 v. Mistress and Maid 1 v. The Ogilvies 1 v. Lord Erlistoun 1 v. Christian's Mistake 1 v. Bread upon the Waters 1 v. A Noble Life 1 v. Olive 2 v. Two Marriages 1 v. Studies from Life 1 v. Poems 1 v. The Woman's Kingdom 2 v. The Unkind Word 2 v. A Brave Lady 2 v. Hannah 2 v. Fair France 1 v. My Mother and I 1 v. The Little Lame Prince 1 v. Sermons out of Church 1 v. The Laurel Bush 1 v. A Legacy 2 v. Young Mrs. Jardine 2 v. His Little Mother 1 v. Plain Speaking 1 v.

Miss Georgiana Craik: Lost and Won 1 v. Faith Unwin's Ordeal

1 v. Leslie Tyrrell 1 v. Winifred's Wooing, and other Tales 1 v. Mildred 1 v. Esther Hill's Secret 2 v. Hero Trevelyan 1 v. Without Kith or Kin 2 v. Only a Butterfly 1 v. Sylvia's Choice; Theresa 2 v. Anne Warwick 1 v. Two Tales of Married Life 2 v. (Vol. I. Hard to Bear, Vol. II. *vide* M. C. Stirling.) Dorcas 2 v. Two Women 2 v.

Mrs. A. Craven: Eliane. Translated by Lady Fullerton 2 v.

F. Marion Crawford: Mr. Isaacs 1 v. Doctor Claudius 1 v.

Miss Cummins: The Lamp-lighter 1 v. Mabel Vaughan 1 v. El Fureidis 1 v. Haunted Hearts 1 v.

"Daily News," War Correspondence 1877 by A. Forbes, etc. 3 v.

De-Foe: Robinson Crusoe 1 v. Democracy. An American Novel 1 v.

Charles Dickens: The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club (w. portrait) 2 v. American Notes 1 v. Oliver Twist 1 v. The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby 2 v. Sketches 1 v. The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit 2 v. A Christmas Carol; the Chimes; the Cricket on the Hearth 1 v. Master Humphrey's Clock (Old Curiosity Shop, Barnaby Rudge, and other Tales) 3 v. Pictures from Italy 1 v. The Battle of Life; the Haunted Man 1 v. Dombey and Son 3 v. David Copperfield 3 v. Bleak House 4 v. A Child's History of England (2 v. 8° M. 2,70.) Hard Times 1 v. Little Dorrit 4 v. A Tale of two Cities 2 v. Hunted Down; The Uncommercial Traveller 1 v. Great Expectations 2 v. Christmas Stories 1 v. Our Mutual Friend 4 v. Somebody's Luggage; Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings; Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy 1 v. Doctor Marigold's Pre-

scriptions; Mugby Junction 1 v. No Thoroughfare 1 v. The Mystery of Edwin Drood 2 v. The Mudfog Papers 1 v. *Vide* Household Words, Novels and Tales, and John Forster.

Charles Dickens: The Letters of Charles Dickens edited by his Sister-in-law and his eldest Daughter 4 v.

B. Disraeli (Lord Beaconsfield): Coningsby 1 v. Sybil 1 v. Contarini Fleming (w. portrait) 1 v. Alroy 1 v. Tancred 2 v. Venetia 2 v. Vivian Grey 2 v. Henrietta Temple 1 v. Lothair 2 v. Endymion 2 v.

W. Hepworth Dixon: Personal History of Lord Bacon 1 v. The Holy Land, 2 v. New America 2 v. Spiritual Wives 2 v. Her Majesty's Tower 4 v. Free Russia 2 v. History of two Queens 6 v. White Conquest 2 v. Diana, Lady Lyle 2 v.

The Earl and the Doctor: South Sea Bubbles 1 v.

Mrs. Edwardes: Archie Lovell 2 v. Steven Lawrence, Yeoman 2 v. Ought we to Visit her? 2 v. A Vagabond Heroine 1 v. Leah: A Woman of Fashion 2 v. A Blue-Stocking 1 v. Jet: Her Face or Her Fortune? 1 v. Vivian the Beauty 1 v. A Ballroom Repentance 2 v.

Miss Amelia B. Edwards: Barbara's History 2 v. Miss Carew 2 v. Hand and Glove 1 v. Half a Million of Money 2 v. Debenham's Vow 2 v. In the Days of my Youth 2 v. Untrodden Peaks and unfrequented Valleys 1 v. Monsieur Maurice 1 v. Black Forest 1 v. A Poetry-Book of Elder Poets 1 v. A Thousand Miles up the Nile 2 v. A Poetry-Book of Modern Poets 1 v. Lord Brackenbury 2 v.

Miss M. Betham-Edwards: The Sylvestres 1 v. Felicia 2 v. Brother Gabriel 2 v. Forestalled 1 v. Exchange no Robbery 1 v. Disarmed 1 v.

George Eliot: Scenes of Clerical Life 2 v. Adam Bede 2 v. The Mill on the Floss 2 v. Silas Marner 1 v. Romola 2 v. Felix Holt 2 v. Daniel Deronda 4 v. The Lifted Veil and Brother Jacob 1 v. Impressions of Theophrastus Such 1 v.

Mrs. Elliot: Diary of an Idle Woman in Italy 2 v. Old Court Life in France 2 v. The Italians 2 v. The Diary of an Idle Woman in Sicily 1 v. Pictures of Old Rome 1 v.

Essays and Reviews 1 v.

Estelle Russell 2 v.

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G. M. Fenn: The Parson o' Dumford 2 v. The Clerk of Portwick 2 v.

Fielding: The History of Tom Jones 2 v.

Five Centuries of the English Language and Literature 1 v.

A. Forbes: My Experiences of the War between France and Germany 2 v. Soldiering and Scribbling 1 v. See also "Daily News," War Correspondence.

Mrs. Forrester: Viva 2 v. Rhona 2 v. Roy and Viola 2 v. My Lord and My Lady 2 v. I have Lived and Loved 2 v. June 2 v.

John Forster: Life of Charles Dickens 6 v. Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith 2 v.

Jessie Fothergill: The First Violin 2 v. Probation 2 v. Made or Marred and "One of Three" 1 v. Kith and Kin 2 v.

"Found Dead," Author of—*vide* James Payn.

Caroline Fox: Memories of Old Friends from her Journals, edited by Horace N. Pym 2 v.

Frank Fairleigh 2 v.

E. A. Freeman: The Growth of the English Constitution 1 v. Select Historical Essays 1 v.

Lady G. Fullerton: Ellen Middleton 1 v. Grantley Manor 2 v. Lady-Bird 2 v. Too Strange not to be True 2 v. Constance Sherwood 2 v. A stormy Life 2 v. Mrs. Gerald's Niece 2 v. The Notary's Daughter 1 v. The Lilies of the Valley 1 v. The Countess de Bonneval 1 v. Rose Leblanc 1 v. Seven Stories 1 v. The Life of Luisa de Carvajal 1 v. A Will and a Way 2 v. Eliane 2 v. (*vide* Craven). Laurentia 1 v.

Mrs. Gaskell: Mary Barton 1 v. Ruth 2 v. North and South 1 v. Lizzie Leigh 1 v. The Life of Charlotte Brontë 2 v. Lois the Witch 1 v. Sylvia's Lovers 2 v. A Dark Night's Work 1 v. Wives and Daughters 3 v. Cranford 1 v. Cousin Phillis, and other Tales 1 v.

Geraldine Hawthorne *vide* "Miss Molly."

Agnes Giberne: The Curate's Home 1 v.

Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone: Rome and the newest Fashions in Religion 1 v. Bulgarian Horrors; Russia in Turkistan 1 v. The Hellenic Factor in the Eastern Problem 1 v.

Goldsmith: Select Works: The Vicar of Wakefield; Poems; Dramas (w. portrait) 1 v.

Mrs. Gore: Castles in the Air 1 v. The Dean's Daughter 2 v. Progress and Prejudice 2 v. Mammon 2 v. A Life's Lessons 2 v. The two Aristocracies 2 v. Heckington 2 v.

Miss Grant: Victor Lescar 2 v. The Sun-Maid 2 v. My Heart's in the Highlands 2 v. Artiste 2 v. Prince Hugo 2 v.

W. A. Baillie Grohman: Tyrol and the Tyrolese 1 v.

"Guy Livingstone," Author of—Guy Livingstone 1 v. Sword and Gown 1 v. Barren Honour 1 v. Border and Bastille 1 v. Maurice Dering 1 v. Sans Merci 2 v. Breaking a Butterfly 2 v. Anteros 2 v. Hagarene 2 v.

J. Habberton: Helen's Babies & Other People's Children 1 v. The Bowsham Puzzle 1 v. One Tramp; Mrs. Mayburn's Twins 1 v.

Mrs. S. C. Hall: Can Wrong be Right? 1 v. Marian 2 v.

Thomas Hardy: The Hand of Ethelberta 2 v. Far from the Madding Crowd 2 v. The Return of the Native 2 v. The Trumpet-Major 2 v. A Laodicean 2 v. Two on a Tower 2 v.

Agnes Harrison: Martin's Vineyard 1 v.

Bret Harte: Prose and Poetry (Tales of the Argonauts; Spanish and American Legends; Condensed Novels; Civic and Character Sketches; Poems) 2 v. Idyls of the Foothills 1 v. Gabriel Conroy 2 v. Two Men of Sandy Bar 1 v. Thankful Blossom 1 v. The Story of a Mine 1 v. Drift from Two Shores 1 v. An Heiress of Red Dog 1 v. The Twins of Table Mountain, etc. 1 v. Jeff Briggs's Love Story, etc. 1 v. Flip, etc. 1 v.

Sir H. Havelock, by the Rev. W. Brock, 1 v.

Nathaniel Hawthorne: The Scarlet Letter 1 v. Transformation 2 v. Passages from the English Note-Books 2 v.

"Heir of Redclyffe," Author of—*vide* Yonge.

Sir Arthur Helps: Friends in Council 2 v. Ivan de Biron 2 v.

Mrs. Hemans: The Select Poetical Works 1 v.

Mrs. Cashel Hoey: A Golden Sorrow 2 v. Out of Court 2 v.

Oliver Wendell Holmes: The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table 1 v. The Professor at the Breakfast-Table 1 v.

Household Words conducted by Ch. Dickens. 1851-56. 36 v. NOVELS and TALES reprinted from Household Words by Ch. Dickens. 1856-59. 11 v.

Miss Howard: One Summer 1 v. Aunt Serena 1 v.

W. D. Howells: A Foregone Conclusion 1 v. The Lady of the Aroostook 1 v. A Modern Instance 2 v. The Undiscovered Country 1 v. Venetian Life (w. portr.) 1 v. Italian Journeys 1 v. A Chance Acquaintance 1 v. Their Wedding Journey 1 v. A Fearful Responsibility, etc. 1 v.

Thos. Hughes: Tom Brown's School Days 1 v.

Jean Ingelow: Off the Skelligs 3 v. Poems 2 v. Fated to be Free 2 v. Sarah de Berenger 2 v. Don John 2 v.

Washington Irving: Sketch Book (w. portrait) 1 v. Life of Mahomet 1 v. Successors of Mahomet

1 v. Oliver Goldsmith 1 v. Chronicles of Wolfert's Roost 1 v. Life of George Washington 5 v.

G.P.R. James: Morley Ernstein (w. portrait) 1 v. Forest Days 1 v. The False Heir 1 v. Arabella Stuart 1 v. Rose d'Albret 1 v. Arrah Neil 1 v. Agincourt 1 v. The Smuggler 1 v. The Step-Mother 2 v. Beauchamp 1 v. Heidelberg 1 v. The Gipsy 1 v. The Castle of Ehrenstein 1 v. Darnley 1 v. Russell 2 v. The Convict 2 v. Sir Theodore Broughton 2 v.

Henry James: The American 2 v. The Europeans 1 v. Daisy Miller 1 v. Roderick Hudson 2 v. The Madonna of the Future, etc. 1 v. Eugene Pickering, etc. 1 v. Confidence 1 v. Washington Square 2 v. The Portrait of a Lady 3 v. Foreign Parts 1 v. French Poets and Novelists 1 v.

J. Cordy Jeaffreson: A Book about Doctors 2 v. A Woman in Spite of herself 2 v. The Real Lord Byron 3 v.

Mrs. Jenkin: "Who Breaks— Pays" 1 v. Skirmishing 1 v. Once and Again 2 v. Two French Marriages 2 v. Within an Ace 1 v. Jupiter's Daughters 1 v.

Edward Jenkins: Ginx's Baby; Lord Bantam 2 v.

"Jennie of 'the Prince's,'" Author of— *vide* Mrs. Buxton.

Douglas Jerrold: The History of St. Giles and St. James 2 v. Men of Character 2 v.

"John Halifax," Author of— *vide* Mrs. Craik.

"Johnny Ludlow," Author of— *vide* Mrs. Wood.

Johnson: The Lives of the English Poets 2 v.

Emily Jolly: Colonel Dacre 2 v.

"Joshua Davidson," Author of— *vide* E. Lynn Linton.

Miss Kavanagh: Nathalie 2 v. Daisy Burns 2 v. Grace Lee 2 v. Rachel Gray 1 v. Adèle 3 v. A Summer and Winter in the Two Sicilies 2 v. Seven Years 2 v. French Women of

Letters 1 v. English Women of Letters 1 v. Queen Mab 2 v. Beatrice 2 v. Sybil's Second Love 2 v. Dora 2 v. Silvia 2 v. Bessie 2 v. John Dorrien 3 v. Two Lilies 2 v. Forget-me-nots 2 v.

Annie Keary: Oldbury 2 v. Castle Daly 2 v.

Kempis: *vide* Thomas a Kempis.

R. B. Kimball: Saint Leger 1 v. Romance of Student Life abroad 1 v. Undercurrents 1 v. Was he Successful? 1 v. To-Day in New-York 1 v.

A. W. Kinglake: Eothen 1 v. Invasion of the Crimea v. 1-10.

Charles Kingsley: Yeast 1 v. Westward ho! 2 v. Two Years ago 2 v. Hypatia 2 v. Alton Locke 1 v. Hereward the Wake 2 v. At Last 2 v.

Charles Kingsley: His Letters and Memories of his Life edited by his Wife 2 v.

Henry Kingsley: Ravenshoe 2 v. Austin Elliot 1 v. The Recollections of Geoffry Hamlyn 2 v. The Hillyars and the Burtons 2 v. Leighton Court 1 v. Valentin 1 v. Oakshott Castle 1 v. Reginald Hetheridge 2 v. The Grange Garden 2 v.

May Laffan: Flitters, Tatters, and the Counsellor, etc. 1 v.

Charles Lamb: The Essays of Elia and Eliana 1 v.

Mary Langdon: Ida May 1 v. "Last of the Cavaliers," Author of—Last of the Cavaliers 2 v. The Gain of a Loss 2 v.

Holme Lee: *vide* Miss Parr. S. Le Fanu: Uncle Silas 2 v. Guy Deverell 2 v.

Mark Lemon: Wait for the End 2 v. Loved at Last 2 v. Falkner Lyle 2 v. Leyton Hall 2 v. Golden Fetters 2 v.

Charles Lever: The O'Donoghue 1 v. The Knight of Gwynne 3 v. Arthur O'Leary 2 v. The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer 2 v. Charles O'Malley 3 v. Tom Burke of "Ours" 3 v. Jack Hin-

ton 2 v. The Daltons 4 v. The Dodd Family abroad 3 v. The Martins of Cro' Martin 3 v. The Fortunes of Glencore 2 v. Roland Cashel 3 v. Davenport Dunn 3 v. Con Cregan 2 v. One of Them 2 v. Maurice Tierney 2 v. Sir Jasper Carew 2 v. Barrington 2 v. A Day's Ride: a Life's Romance 2 v. Luttrell of Arran 2 v. Tony Butler 2 v. Sir Brook Fossbrooke 2 v. The Bramleights of Bishop's Folly 2 v. A Rent in a Cloud 1 v. That Boy of Norcott's 1 v. St. Patrick's Eve; Paul Gosslett's Confessions 1 v. Lord Kilgobbin 2 v.

G. H. Lewes: Ranthorpe 1 v. Physiology of Common Life 2 v. On Actors and the Art of Acting 1 v.

E. Lynn Linton: Joshua Davidson 1 v. Patricia Kemball 2 v. Atonement of Leam Dundas 2 v. The World well Lost 2 v. Under which Lord? 2 v. With a Silken Thread etc. 1 v. Todhunters' at Loanin' Head etc. 1 v. "My Love!" 2 v.

Laurence W. M. Lockhart: Mine is Thine 2 v.

Longfellow: Poetical Works (w. portrait) 3 v. The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri 3 v. The New-England Tragedies 1 v. The Divine Tragedy 1 v. Three Books of Song 1 v. The Masque of Pandora 1 v.

M. Lonsdale: Sister Dora 1 v. A Lost Battle 2 v.

Lutfullah: Autobiography of Lutfullah, by Eastwick 1 v.

Lord Lytton: *vide* Bulwer.

Robert Lord Lytton (Owen Meredith): Poems 2 v. Fables in Song 2 v.

Lord Macaulay: History of England (w. portrait) 10 v. Critical and

Historical Essays 5 v. Lays of Ancient Rome 1 v. Speeches 2 v. Biographical Essays 1 v. William Pitt, Atterbury 1 v. (See also Trevelyan).

Justin McCarthy: Waterdale Neighbours 2 v. Lady Disdain 2 v. Miss Misanthrope 2 v. A History of our own Times 5 v. Donna Quixote 2 v. A short History of our own Times 2 v.

George MacDonald: Alec Forbes of Howglen 2 v. Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood 2 v. David Elginbrod 2 v. The Vicar's Daughter 2 v. Malcolm 2 v. St. George and St. Michael 2 v. The Marquis of Lossie 2 v. Sir Gibbie 2 v. Mary Marston 2 v. The Gifts of the Child Christ, etc. 1 v. The Princess and Curdie 1 v.

Mrs. Mackarness: Sunbeam Stories 1 v. A Peerless Wife 2 v. A Mingled Yarn 2 v.

Charles McKnight: Old Fort Duquesne 2 v.

Norman Macleod: The old Lieutenant and his Son 1 v.

Mrs. Macquoid: Patty 2 v. Miriam's Marriage 2 v. Pictures across the Channel 2 v. Too Soon 1 v. My Story 2 v. Diane 2 v. Beside the River 2 v. A Faithful Lover 2 v.

"Mademoiselle Mori," Author of— Mademoiselle Mori 2 v. Denise 1 v. Madame Fontenoy 1 v. On the Edge of the Storm 1 v. The Atelier du Lys 2 v. In the Olden Time 2 v.

Lord Mahon: *vide* Stanhope.

E. S. Maine: Scarscliff Rocks 2 v.

R. Blachford Mansfield: The Log of the Water Lily 1 v.

Mark Twain: The Adventures of Tom Sawyer 1 v. The Innocents Abroad; or, the New Pilgrims' Progress 2 v. A Tramp Abroad 2 v. "Roughing it" 1 v. The Innocents at Home 1 v. The Prince and the Pauper 2 v. The Stolen White Elephant, etc. 1 v. Life on the Mississippi 2 v. Sketches 1 v.

Marmorne 1 v.

Capt. Marryat: Jacob Faithful (w. portrait) 1 v. Percival Keene

1 v. Peter Simple 1 v. Japhet 1 v. Monsieur Violet 1 v. The Settlers 1 v. The Mission 1 v. The Privateer's-Man 1 v. The Children of the New-Forest 1 v. Valerie 1 v. Mr. Midshipman Easy 1 v. The King's Own 1 v.

Florence Marryat: Love's Conflict 2 v. For Ever and Ever 2 v. The Confessions of Gerald Estcourt 2 v. Nelly Brooke 2 v. Véronique 2 v. Petronel 2 v. Her Lord and Master 2 v. The Prey of the Gods 1 v. Life of Captain Marryat 1 v. Mad Dumaresq 2 v. No Intentions 2 v. Fighting the Air 2 v. A Star and a Heart 1 v. The Poison of Asps 1 v. A Lucky Disappointment 1 v. My own Child 2 v. Her Father's Name 2 v. A Harvest of Wild Oats 2 v. A Little Stepson 1 v. Written in Fire 2 v. Her World against a Lie 2 v. A Broken Blossom 2 v. The Root of all Evil 2 v. The Fair-haired Alda 2 v. With Cupid's Eyes 2 v. My Sister the Actress 2 v. Phyllida 2 v. How They Loved Him 2 v. Facing the Footlights (w. portrait) 2 v. A Moment of Madness 1 v. The Ghost of Charlotte Cray, etc. 1 v.

Mrs. Marsh: Ravenscliffe 2 v. Emilia Wyndham 2 v. Castle Avon 2 v. Aubrey 2 v. The Heiress of Haughton 2 v. Evelyn Marston 2 v. The Rose of Ashurst 2 v.

Emma Marshall: Mrs. Mainwaring's Journal 1 v. Benvenuta 1 v. Lady Alice 1 v. Dayspring 1 v. Life's Aftermath 1 v.

Helen Mathers: "Cherry Ripe!" 2 v. "Land o' the Leal" 1 v. My Lady Green Sleeves 2 v. As he comes up the Stair, etc. 1 v. Sam's Sweetheart 2 v.

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George Meredith: The Ordeal of Feverel 2 v. Beauchamp's Career 2 v. The Tragic Comedians 1 v.

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"Miss Molly," Author of—Geraldine Hawthorne 1 v.

"Molly Bawn," Author of—Molly Bawn 2 v. Mrs. Geoffrey 2 v. Faith and Unfaith 2 v. Portia 2 v. Loys, Lord Berresford, etc. 1 v. Her First Appearance, etc. 1 v. Phyllis 2 v.

Miss Florence Montgomery: Misunderstood 1 v. Thrown Together 2 v. Thwarted 1 v. Wild Mike 1 v. Seaforth 2 v. The Blue Veil 1 v.

Moore: Poetical Works (w. portrait) 5 v.

Lady Morgan's Memoirs 3 v.

Henry Morley: Of English Literature in the Reign of Victoria. With Facsimiles of the Signatures of Authors in the Tauchnitz Edition [v. 2000].

E. C. Grenville: Murray: The Member for Paris 2 v. Young Brown 2 v. The Boudoir Cabal 3 v. French Pictures in English Chalk (1st Series) 2 v. The Russians of To-day 1 v. French Pictures in English Chalk (2nd Series) 2 v. Strange Tales 1 v. That Artful Vicar 2 v. Six Months in the Ranks 1 v. People I have met 1 v.

"My little Lady," Author of—*vide* E. Frances Poynter.

New Testament [v. 1000].

Mrs. Newby: Common Sense 2 v.

Dr. J. H. Newman: Callista 1 v.

"Nina Balatka," Author of—*vide* Anthony Trollope.

"No Church," Author of—No Church 2 v. Owen:—a Waif 2 v.

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Mrs. Oliphant: Passages in the Life of Mrs. Margaret Maitland of Sunnyside 1 v. The Last of the Mortimers 2 v. Agnes 2 v. Madonna Mary 2 v. The Minister's Wife 2 v. The Rector, and the Doctor's Family 1 v. Salem Chapel 2 v. The Perpetual Curate 2 v. Miss Marjoribanks 2 v. Ombra 2 v. Memoir of Count de Montalembert 2 v. May 2 v. Innocent 2 v. For Love and Life 2 v. A Rose in June 1 v. The Story of Valentine and his Brother 2 v. Whiteladies 2 v. The Curate in Charge 1 v. Phoebe, Junior 2 v. Mrs. Arthur 2 v. Carità 2 v. Young Musgrave 2 v. The Primrose Path 2 v. Within the Precincts 3 v. The greatest Heiress in England 2 v. He that will not when he may 2 v. Harry Joscelyn 2 v. In Trust 2 v. It was a Lover and his Lass 3 v.

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Ouida: Idalia 2 v. Tricotrín 2 v. Puck 2 v. Chandos 2 v. Strathmore 2 v. Under two Flags 2 v. Folle-Farine 2 v. A Leaf in the Storm; A Dog of Flanders and other Stories 1 v. Cecil Castlemaine's Gage 1 v. Madame la Marquise 1 v. Pascarel 2 v. Held in Bondage 2 v. Two little Wooden Shoes 1 v. Signa (w. portrait) 3 v. In a Winter City 1 v. Ariadne 2 v. Friendship 2 v. Moths 3 v. Pipistrello 1 v. A Village Commune 2 v. In Maremma 3 v. Bimbi 1 v. Wanda 3 v. Frescoes, etc. 1 v.

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Paul Ferroll 1 v. Year after Year 1 v. Why Paul Ferroll killed his Wife 1 v.
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Miss Fr. M. Peard: One Year 2 v. The Rose-Garden 1 v. Unawares 1 v. Thorpe Regis 1 v. A Winter Story 1 v. A Madrigal 1 v. Cartouche 1 v. Mother Molly 1 v. Schloss and Town 2 v. Contradictions 2 v.

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Pope: Select Poetical Works (w. portrait) 1 v.

E. Frances Poynter: My little Lady 2 v. Ersilia 2 v. Among the Hills 1 v.

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Horace N. Pym: *vide* C. Fox.

W. F. Rae: Westward by Rail 1 v.

Charles Reade: "It is never too late to mend" 2 v. "Love me little, love me long" 1 v. The Cloister and the Hearth 2 v. Hard Cash 3 v. Put Yourself in his Place 2 v. A Terrible Temp-

tation 2 v. Peg Woffington 1 v.
Christie Johnstone 1 v. A Simple-
ton 2 v. The Wandering Heir 1 v.
A Woman-Hater 2 v. Radiana 1 v.

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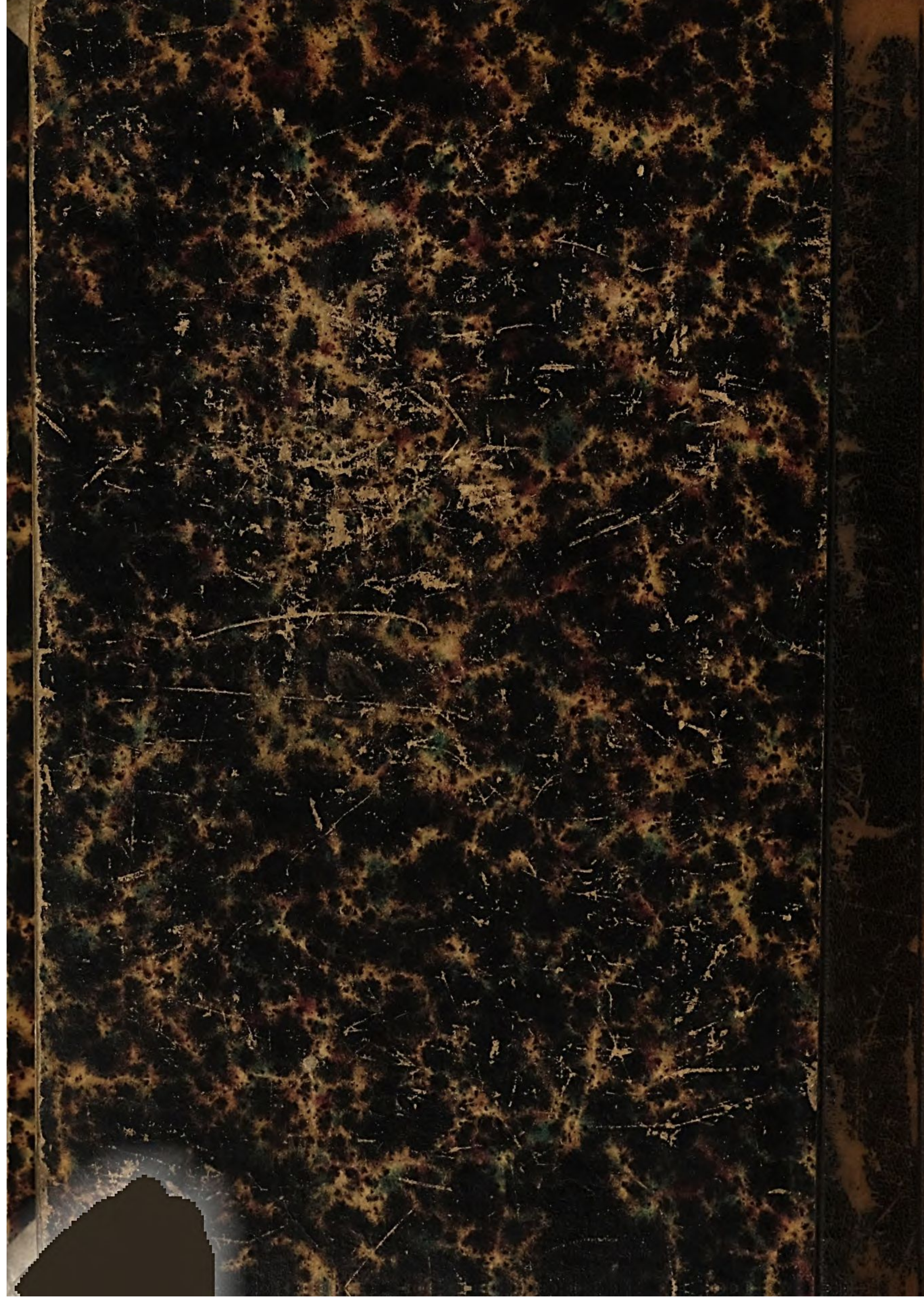
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